

open Ruy Lopez



EVERYMAN CHESS

Clayton B. Kopp



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To my family

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PREFACE



The Open variation of the Ruy Lopez (or Spanish) starts with the moves

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Qf6
5 O-O Qxe4

What is the big attraction of the variation for Black?

In the Open variation (or simply 'Open') of the Ruy Lopez Black aims for active piece play and an asymmetric pawn structure including a queenside majority. The Open is a logically named variation involving fluid piece play and offers a more dynamic struggle than the long-winded manoeuvres of the Closed Ruy Lopez.

The variation has remained in popular use since the 19th century and has a remarkable pedigree. Virtually every World Champion has played it – and most with both colours! A number of great historical matches have included important games from this variation, including of course the World Championship clashes Alekhine-Euwe, Karpov-Korchnoi and Kasparov-Anand. Over the last quarter of a century one associates this opening primarily with Korchnoi, Timman and Yusupov, but in recent years Anand has also included this opening in his repertoire.

The Open attracts players of all styles: Korchnoi is a prolific analyst and practitioner

of the Open and by nature a provocative, counter-attacking player. Timman is more of an aggressive tactical player who is attracted to the more critical lines (and like the other great Dutchman before him, Max Euwe, he is happy and willing to play the Open with either colour), whereas Yusupov is a more cautious positional player.

Some lines of the Open involve long, forcing tactical variations; others careful manoeuvring. In the Dilworth variation Black even takes the gamble of giving up two active minor pieces for a modest rook and pawn in order to wrest the initiative from White's grasp. Overall in the following pages we shall see a rich family of variations with something for everyone.

In some opening books, the author tries to hype their choice of opening by pointing out 'surprise value', 'attacking chances', 'easy for the opponent to go wrong' or whatever. None of these claims hold much water if the opening is not fundamentally sound and robust against best play.

A statistical analysis of a large database shows that the Open scores an average percentage (44%) with an average length of 38 moves per game. Fair enough, but this is hardly a persuasive argument! It is more significant that whereas many active lines in

the Ruy Lopez come and go with fashion or the latest novelty, the Open remains, year in, year out, a popular option among the top players, providing interesting games, active play and winning chances, while at the same time being positionally rock-solid.

Although this book is written primarily from Black's point of view, I have purposely tried to be objective with my analysis, judgements and recommendations. The illustrative games have been chosen for their intrinsic worth, not because Black wins every one of them!

There is nothing more annoying than opening books with ridiculous bias, in which

some strange ideas are extolled and clear improvements for the opponent are conveniently ignored. Here I have tried to point out the rough with the smooth, the good with the bad and, yes, sometimes even the ugly. I trust that this book can be used with confidence by White players in their efforts to obtain something against the opening. However, at the same time it offers a mainstream, sound but dynamic opening that can stand at the heart of your repertoire against 1 e4.

Glenn Flear
Baillargues, France, January 2000

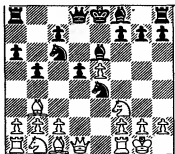
INTRODUCTION



The core of the Open variation is the *tabiya* that arises after the eight standard moves

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Lb5 a6 4 Lxa4 Qf6 5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Lb3 d5 8 dxe5 Le6

which forms the starting position of all but one chapter in this book.



Here White has a kingside majority with an advanced pawn on e5, whereas Black in compensation has a d-pawn and a queenside majority. Black has a well-placed knight on e4 but this is prone to attack by f2-f3 or exchange by Qb1-d2. Although White is attacking the d5-pawn twice, it is sufficiently well defended. Finally, White has already managed to remove his king from the centre, whereas Black is not yet ready to do so.

Typical Themes for White

Here are a summary of the typical plans (with game references as thematic examples) that White commonly adopts. These are often combined for added effect.

1. Push the f-pawn along with its counterpart on e5 to create a dangerous attacking force (Game 32).
2. The pawn on e5 stops the black knight from retreating to f6, so pressure on the b1-h7 diagonal can cause problems against the h7-square (Games 24, 31, 42, 52 and 59).
3. The knight on e4 is annoying so White will try to exchange, undermine or at least push back the beast, either with f2-f3 or Qb1-d2 (most games!).
4. Create pressure on the d5-square and along the d-file where Black's queen is generally resident (Games 36, 48-49 and Chapter 9).
5. An early a2-a4 putting pressure on the b5-pawn and opening up the rook's line of action (Games 16, 25-26 and 47).
6. The advance b2-b4 aiming to fix Black's queenside on rather passive squares (Games 4, 37, 41, 47-48, 77 and 88).
7. Aiming to occupy the c5- and d4-squares with pieces in order to fix Black's majority and limit his scope for counterplay. This often involves the exchange of Black's

dark-squared bishop (Games 4, 31 and 36).

8. With the black light-squared bishop on the kingside, advancing the kingside pawns to harass and weaken the black king's defences (Games 14, 37 and 52).

9. Manoeuvring a knight to the useful f5-square (Games 35 and 37-38).

10. Disruptive ideas based on e5-e6 either to break-up Black's pawn structure or as part of tactical play on the kingside (Game 17, 36, 38 and 57).

11. Allowing Black to capture the pawn on e5 in order to gain time (Games 18, 23 and 51).

12. Recapturing away from the centre with c2xb3 in order to press on the c-file (Games 61, 78 and 81).

Typical Themes for Black

For his part, Black also has several common ideas that occur time and again. Likewise, Black may use several of these in one game.

1. Development of the bishop to c5 with consequent pressure on the a7-g1 diagonal, particularly the f2-square (Part One and Game 69).

2. Capturing on f2 with bishop and knight and following-up with ...f7-f6 (Chapter 1 and Game 13).

3. Supporting the knight with ...f7-f5, so that if White captures en passant the f-file is opened for Black and the knight can retreat to the safe f6-square (Games 7, 24-27, 43, 49 and 59). If White ignores the f-pawn (Games 8-12 and 44) then it can even threaten to advance to f4.

4. Pressure on the e5-point, sometimes just with pieces such as ...Qd7 (Games 53-54) or by simply seeking its exchange with ...f7-f6 (Games 15, 20-21, 23 and 63).

5. Black plays the liberating ...d5-d4, opening lines for his pieces (Games 29-30, 37 and 70-76).

6. Black plays for queenside expansion with ...c7-c5 with options of ...b5-b4 or ...d5-d4 creating a passed d-pawn (Games 15, 52

and 59).

7. Supporting the d-pawn with ...Wd7 and ...Qd8 (Games 37-38 and 56-58).

8. The standard pin ...Bg4, slowing down White's kingside expansion and then using this bishop as a defender of the black king with ...Bh5 and ...Bg6 (Games 31-39, 52, 55 and 69).

9. Pushing the a-pawn to harass a white knight on b3 and generally gaining space (Games 29-30 and 68).

10. Developing quickly, allowing White to capture on e4 or d5. This sometimes involves gambiting the pawn or perhaps just a weakening of the black structure (Games 31 and 48).

11. Simplifying by exchanging knights on d2 (Games 40, 42, 58 and 88) or by eliminating the bishop with ...Qxb3 (Games 41, 61-62, 68, 77 and 80-81).

12. Isolating his own d-pawn with the line-opening ...c7-c5 (Games 44, 46, 50 and 88).

In summary, Black's pieces can all be developed harmoniously, his king can usually castle and he has no permanent weak points. White has a number of interesting options but no automatic route to an advantage. For each of White's thrusts Black has a counter, and thus a fascinating struggle begins to take shape.

The Structure of this Book

The first two parts of this book deal with the standard move 9 c3, to which Black usually replies 9...Qc5 (Chapters 1-4) or 9...Qe7 (Chapters 5-8). However, in recent years 9 c3 has been replaced by 9 Qbd2 as the most popular move, since the latter reduces Black's options and completely avoids the 9 c3 Qc5 variation. After 9 Qbd2 the most common move is 9...Qc5, when after 10 c3 Black can choose between the 10...d4 of Chapter 10 or 10...Qe7 of Chapters 5 and 6. I personally feel that 9 Qbd2 is overrated and we shall see that Black has several ways of obtaining a

good game. Although 9 ♖e2 , intending 10 ♘d1 with an early $c2-c4$ pressing down the d-line, is out of fashion, personally I have found this the most difficult to meet (see Chapter 9). The final two chapters deal with other

possibilities for both sides, avoiding the main line. Chapter 11 covers White's other ninth moves and Chapter 12 wraps things up with a look at early deviations from the standard move order.

CHAPTER ONE

9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♗bd2 0-0
11 ♖c2 ♗xf2 12 ♖xf2 f6



1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♗f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♗bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2
♗xf2 12 ♖xf2 f6

In this chapter we shall consider the famous Dilworth Variation, named after the English correspondence player who promoted it for so long. The Dilworth leads to sharp forcing variations where Black, for a modest material investment, obtains a dangerous initiative. In some ways it is similar to the Marshall Attack, though it is much less popular and less well regarded.

It goes against one's gut feeling to give up two active minor pieces for an inactive rook and pawn. However, it is more important to concentrate on what remains on the board: an exposed white king and Black's lead in development with open lines for his rooks after ...f7-f6.

Typically, if the players (especially White) avoid a labyrinth of traps we often see simplification to an ending with three minor pieces against rook, bishop and two pawns. Here theory has a slight preference for White, but in reality Black's activity is sufficient to earn good play and it is often the second player who has the better practical chances. Key factors in judging resulting positions are: How many extra pawns does

Black have? Is Black likely to invade on the seventh or eighth ranks with his major pieces? How well is White's king defended? And how effectively has White developed and can his pieces find firm footholds in the centre?

Yusupov, Mikhalevski and others have shown that the Dilworth is a fully viable way to wrest the initiative and obtain realistic winning chances with Black. Over the next six games we will see an instructive battle between minor pieces looking for central outposts and rooks seeking open lines and invasion.

Game 1 Ljubojevic-Yusupov Tilburg 1987

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♗f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♗bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2
♗xf2 12 ♖xf2 f6 13 exf6

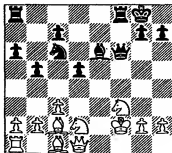
There is little point in avoiding this move, as allowing Black to capture on e5 and maintain a passed central pawn is dubious: 13 ♗d4? ♗xd4 14 cxd4 ♖xd4 15 ♖h5 g6 16 ♖xg6 ♖c7, as in I.Larsen-Eriksen, Denmark 1965, is already winning for Black and 13 ♗f1?! ♖xf2+ 14 ♖xf2 fxe5 15 ♖g1 e4 16

♜g5 ♜f6 17 ♖e3 ♜e5, as in Ionescu-Dilworth, correspondence 1985, also clearly favours the second player. Note how the pawn on e4 limits White's minor pieces.

For the record, 13 ♜e2 represents White's best alternative to 13 ♖f6 and offers chances for equality. For example, 13...♖xe5 14 ♜b3 ♖xf2+ 15 ♜xf2 e4 16 ♜e1 ♖g4 17 ♜fd4 ♜e5 18 ♜c5 ♜f6 19 ♖e3 ♜ae8 20 ♜g3? (after Van der Tak's improvement 20 ♖d1! White is probably okay) 20...h5 21 ♖b3 ♜h8 22 h3 ♜d6 23 ♜h4 ♜g6 24 ♜e1 ♖c8 25 ♜e2 ♖xh3, as in Kluger-Szabo, Hungarian Championship 1946, when Black was on top. 13...♖xf2+

Experience has shown that delaying this capture enables White to limit the exposure of his king: 13...♜xf6?! 14 ♜f1! ♜ae8 15 ♜b3 ♖xf2+ 16 ♜xf2 ♜e5 17 ♜bd4 c5 18 ♖g5 and in fact it's Black's king that is the problem, e.g. 18...♜xg5 (or 18...♜f7?? 19 ♖xh7+) 19 ♖xh7+ ♜h8 20 ♜xg5 ♜xf2 21 ♜xf2 (21 ♜xh6?! also looks good) 21...cxd4 22 cxd4!

14 ♜xf2 ♜xf6



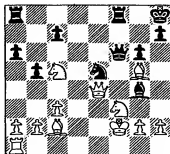
15 ♜g1

Games 2-6 feature 15 ♜f1. There are two other tries, the first is bad, the second rather good:

a) 15 ♜f1? g5 16 ♜g1 g4 17 ♜d4 ♜xd4 18 ♜xf6 ♜e2+ 19 ♜f2 ♜xf6+ 20 ♜xe2 ♜af8 with a clear advantage to Black who is coming into f2 whilst White is far from

completing his development, as in Krutnik-Klompus, correspondence 1986.

b) 15 ♜b3!? (a good try for White with surprise value) 15...♜e5 (15...g5 16 ♜d3 ♜f7 and now 17 ♖xg5! is a trick that crops up frequently in the Dilworth) 16 ♜c5! (16 ♜g3?! ♜ae8 and 16 ♜bd4? ♖g4 17 b4 ♜ae8 18 ♖d3 ♜h4+, as in Weir-Dilworth, correspondence 1941, give Black strong attacking chances) 16...♖g4?! (16...♜xf3? has been suggested by Velickovic) 17 ♜xd5+ ♜h8 18 ♜e4 g6 (not 18...♜h4+ 19 ♜g1 ♜xf3+ 20 gxf3 ♜ae8 21 ♖g5!, as in Rey Ardid-Kleczynski, Paris Olympiad 1924, when Black is in trouble) 19 ♖g5!!



(My own clear improvement on the theoretical continuation 19 ♖h6 ♜xf3 20 gxf3 ♖xf3 21 ♜d4 ♖d1+ 22 ♜e3 ♜xd4+ 23 cxd4 ♖xc2 24 ♖xf8 ♜xf8 with equality according to Velickovic) and if 19...♜xg5 then 20 ♜xa8.

15...♜ae8

A sign that this variation is not particularly troublesome is that even 15...g5 (15...♖g5, as in Babula-Simacek, Czech Republic 1998/89, is best met by 16 ♜f1! and White hits the d5-square) gives Black a good game: 16 ♜e1 g4 17 ♜h4?! ♖f5 18 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 19 ♖xf5 ♜xf5 20 ♜h4 ♜e5 21 ♜b3 was given as unclear by Korchnoi, but a recent practical test shows that Black is better after 21...♜e1+ 22 ♜f2 ♜ae8 23 ♜f5 (23 ♖f4 looks preferable but doesn't equalise) 23...♜e2+ 24 ♜g3 ♜g1 25

♠f4 ♞exg2+ 26 ♣h4 ♠xa1 27 ♣xa1 ♠xb2, as in Ginzburg-Pereyra Arcija, Argentine Championship 1996.

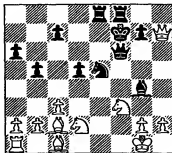
The tricky 17 ♣g5 is the best try and should lead to equal play according to the following analysis by Velickovic: 17...♠f5 18 ♠b3 ♠ad8 19 ♣de4 ♣g6 20 ♣g3 h6 21 ♣xf5 ♠xf5 22 ♣e6+ ♣xe6 23 ♣xe6 ♠e8 24 ♣f4 ♠e1+ 25 ♣f2 ♠xc1 26 ♠xc1 ♠xf4+ 27 ♣g3 ♠f5.

16 ♣f1

16 h3, 16 ♣b3 and 16 ♣f1 are all well met by 16...♣e5.

16...♠f5

16...♠g4 is generally recommended here. I am happy with Black's position after 17 h3 ♠xf3 18 ♣xd3 (18 ♣xf3 ♣d6 19 ♣d1 ♣g3 and wins, for instance 20 ♣f1 ♠e1 21 ♣xd5+ ♣h8 22 ♠d3 ♣e5 23 ♠f4 ♣xd3 - Korchnoi) 18...♣e5 19 ♠d1 g5 20 ♣f2 ♣d3 21 ♣d4 ♣xd4+ 22 ♣xd4 ♠xf3 23 ♠xf3 ♠e1+ 24 ♣h2 c6! with a clear edge for Black in Ostojic-Karaklaic, Beverwijk 1967. However, I feel uncomfortable with 17 ♣d3 ♣e5 18 ♣xh7+ ♣f7.



The books prefer Black because of 19 ♣h4 ♣xf3+ 20 ♣xf3 ♣xh4 21 ♣xh4 ♠e1+ 22 ♣f2 ♠e2+ 23 ♣g3 ♠xc2 24 ♣xg4 ♠e8 25 ♠f4, as in Pupko-Monin, correspondence 1974, but is this convincing? The black king on f7 is ugly and it wouldn't surprise me if White has some clever resource.

An untried alternative is 16...♣h8? 17

♣d3 g6 (or even 17...♠g8) 18 ♣b3 ♠f5 19 ♠g5! (unclear according to Korchnoi).

17 ♠xf5

Korchnoi again concludes that things are unclear after 17 ♠b3 ♣d6 18 ♣f2 ♠d3 19 ♣g3 ♣c5+ 20 ♣h1 (20 ♣f2 ♠e1+! was the end of that in Sibarevic-Rogers, Mendrisio 1987) 20...♣h8 21 ♣g1 b4, when White is tangled up but does Black have anything convincing?

17...♣xf5 18 b3

Not 18 ♣b3? ♣e5 19 ♣bd4 ♣xd3+ 20 ♣xf3 ♣c2 with chronic paralysis of the white camp in Müller-Cruz Lopez, French Team Championship 1998.

18...d4!

In Game 2 the early advance ...d5-d4 proves to be a mistake, but here it creates problems for White. There are some differences, as here line-opening for Black can be achieved without giving away any central outposts. In the next game White was able to occupy the centre, had access to e4 and didn't have such a weak c3-square.

Alternatively, 18...♣e5 19 ♠a3 ♠f6 20 ♣xe5 ♣xe5 21 ♣d3, as in Kagan-Monin, correspondence 1973, leaves White with the better prospects as he has completed his development and Black only has one pawn (note that 21...♣e3+ 22 ♣xe3 ♠xe3 23 ♠c5! ♠e2 24 ♣f3 ♠g6 25 g3 ♠f6 26 ♠e1 leaves White in command).

19 ♣xd4

Given as a decisive error by most commentators who prefer 19 ♠a3 dxc3 20 ♠xf8 ♠xf8 21 ♣c4 (not 21 ♣c1 ♣d4) 21...♣c5+ 22 ♣f2 ♣xf2+ 23 ♣xf2 bxc4 24 ♠c1 cxb3 25 axb3 (Yusupov), when Black has an extra pawn in the ending although White has drawing chances.

19...♣xd4 20 ♣xd4?

This is the real mistake as White is now in trouble whereas after 20 ♠a3! (my move) his position looks playable. Then 20...♣e2+ 21 ♣h1 c5 would offer some initiative for Black but nothing concrete.

20...♖c5 21 ♖b2

'Ljubo' banks on a blockade as 21 ♖d3? fails to 21...♙e1+ 22 ♗f1 ♖xd4+! 23 ♖xd4 ♙xf1 mate!

21...♙xf1+ 22 ♙xf1 ♙e2 23 ♙f2

On 23 ♙d1 ♖h5! is awkward.

23...♙xf2 24 ♖xf2 ♖d5

Three pieces are often the equal of a queen, but not here. Black's extra c-pawn can be used to dislodge the knight on d4 and the queen can invade on d3, c2 or b1. White has no central pawns and thus has serious difficulties in finding any solid outposts for the pieces. White now blundered but the defence was already problematic.

25 ♖e3?

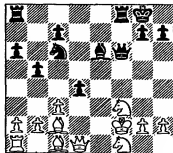
After 25 ♗f3 then 25...♖e4 is a nuisance.

25...♖e5+ 0-1

Black will follow up by ...c7-c5 winning material.

Game 2 Short-Popovic Belgrade 1987

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♗f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♘bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2
♗xf2 12 ♙xf2 f6 13 exf6 ♖xf2+ 14
♖xf2 ♖xf6 15 ♗f1 d4?



This move, opening up lines, is aggressive but remember that White's pieces can also benefit. The black rooks are happy enough

on e8 and f8 and there is no need to blot open the centre.

Nowadays, most grandmasters generally play 15...♗e5 16 ♖e3 ♙ae8 or 15...♙ae8 ♗g1 ♗e5 17 ♖e3 as in Games 3-6. Bad 15...g5? in view of 16 ♖d3 ♙f7 17 ♖xe5!, in Andersson-Poletaev, correspondence 1960, when 17...♖g5 18 ♖xh7+ ♙xh7 ♖xh7+ ♖xh7 20 ♗xg5+ wins for White. 16 ♗g1!

An excellent move, simply improving h worst-placed piece. Other moves are found to be lacking:

a) 16 cxd4! ♗xd4 17 ♖e4 ♙ad8, as Selke-Roth, correspondence 1986.

b) 16 ♖d3! g6 17 ♗g3 ♗e5 18 ♖xd4+ 19 ♖d1 ♙ad8, as in Terenkov-Lazare correspondence 1985.

c) 16 ♖e4 dxc3 17 bxc3 (17 ♖xc6 cxb2 good for Black) 17...♖xc3 and now:

c1) 18 ♖e3 ♙ad8 19 ♖c1 ♖xc1 20 ♙xc ♗e5 favoured Black in Monsalvo-Rot' correspondence 1977.

c2) 18 ♖g5 was given by Korchnoi, an improvement, but surely after 18...♙ae (or even 18...♖e5 19 ♖xc6 ♖c5+) 19 ♖c ♖d4+ 20 ♖xd4 ♗xd4 21 ♙xc7 ♖xa2 Black has all the chances.

16...♗e5

On 16...dxc3 17 ♖g5 ♖f7 then 18 bxc neatly tidies up. White is better as his minor pieces are developed and working well whereas Black has only one pawn and n pressure against the white monarch.

17 cxd4 ♗xf3+ 18 gxf3

Inferior is 18 ♖xf3 due to 18...♖xd4+ 1 ♖e3 ♖c4! 20 ♖d2 ♖xb2 (Short).

18...♙ad8

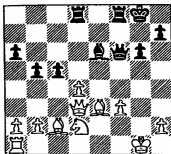
On 18...♖d5 19 f4! Black has no pawn and nothing against White's kingside despite first appearances.

19 ♖e3 c5

After 19...♖xf3 20 ♖xf3 ♙xf3 21 ♖e White has great minor pieces in the ending. 20 ♖d3 g6 21 ♗d2

Black will win back the pawn on d4 but

White's pieces are ready for action.



21...♙h3

Popovic later proposed 21...♞f7, but 22 ♙f2 cxd4 23 ♚e4 ♜xf3 24 ♞xf3 ♞xf3 25 ♚g5 leaves the black position in ruins. Otherwise the exchanges after 21...♙f5 22 ♚e4 ♙xe4 23 ♞xe4 ♞fe8 (23...♜xf3 24 dxc5 ♞xe4 25 ♙xe4 ♞fe8 26 ♙g5 is hopeless but 23...cxd4!? is the best try to complicate White's task) 24 ♞f4 ♜xf4 25 ♙xf4 ♞xd4 26 ♙e4 leave the two bishops dominating.

22 ♞e2 cxd4 23 ♙h6 d3

Or 23...♞fe8 24 ♚e4 etc.

24 ♙b3+ ♚h8 25 ♞f2 ♞de8 26 ♙e3

Quicker but complicated is 26 ♙xf8! ♞e2 27 ♙e7 ♞xb2 28 ♞b1 ♞e5 29 f4 (Short).

26...♞d8 27 ♚e4 ♞e5 28 ♙d2 ♞c8 29 ♞e1 ♞h5 30 ♞d4+ 1-0

Black's rooks failed to pressurise effectively and White's minor pieces were able to gradually occupy key central squares. Black's best results in the Dilworth come from concentrating pressure on the vulnerable f-file, as we shall see in the following games.

Game 3 Kaminski-Chekhov Lubniewice 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♚c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♚f6
5 0-0 ♚xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5
♙e6 9 c3 ♙c5 10 ♚bd2 0-0 11 ♙c2

♚xf2 12 ♞xf2 f6 13 exf6 ♙xf2+ 14
♚xf2 ♞xf6 15 ♚f1

The move order 15 ♚g1 ♞ae8 16 ♚f1
♚e5 17 ♙e3 transposes to the game.

15...♚e5 16 ♙e3

White can also simply unpin a move earlier with 16 ♚g1. The idea is that, by giving up a pawn to exchange queens, the white minor pieces can be activated in the ending. However, my impression is that in practical play it proves to be difficult to tie down the black rook(s). Play may then continue 16...♚xf3+ 17 gxf3 ♞xf3 18 ♞xf3 ♞xf3 19 ♙g5! (after 19 ♙d1 ♞f7 20 ♚g3 ♙h3 21 ♙e2 ♞e8 22 ♙d2 c5, as in Morovic-Yusupov, Tunis Interzonal 1985, Black is better due to his active pieces and fluid majorities on both wings; the further 23 ♙f1 ♙xf1 24 ♞xf1 ♞xf1+ 25 ♚xf1 ♚f7 26 ♚f2 ♚e6 27 ♙e3 ♞f8+ 28 ♚e2 ♚d6 29 ♚h5 ♞f7 gave good winning chances for Black) 19...♞af8 20 ♚d2 ♞f2 21 ♞f1 ♞xf1+ 22 ♚xf1 c5 23 ♙e3 d4 24 cxd4 cxd4 25 ♙xd4 ♙xa2 with drawish simplification in Nijboer-Rogers, Netherlands 1987/88.

16...♞ae8

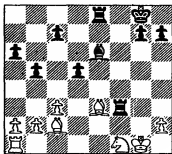
The tempting 16...♞h4?! 17 ♚g1 ♚xf3+ 18 gxf3 ♞f6 19 ♙d4 ♞g5+ 20 ♚h1 ♙h3 21 ♚e3 ♞f7 22 ♞g1, as in Kupreichik-Stoica, Kirovakan 1978, just enables White to consolidate. Also imprecise is 16...♚xf3?! 17 gxf3 ♞f7 (or 17...c6 18 ♙c5 ♞f7 19 ♞e2 ♙g4 20 ♚d2 a5 21 ♞e1 ♙d7 22 ♞e5 ♞xe5 23 ♞xe5 a4 24 ♚g3, when with only one pawn and inactive pieces Black is worse) 18 ♚g2 ♞e8 19 f4 ♙f5 20 ♙xf5 ♞xf5 21 ♚g3 ♞e6 22 ♙d2 c5 23 ♞f3 which yields a slight edge to White according to Velickovic. Black's rooks have no invasion squares and White has opportunities to further improve his position.

17 ♚g1

The main alternative 17 ♙c5 can be seen in Games 4-6. Also common is 17 ♙d4, when after 17...♞h4+ 18 ♚g1 ♚xf3+ 19 gxf3 ♞g5+ 20 ♚g3 ♙h3 21 a4 ♙e6 (21...h5?

22 f4 ♠xf4 23 ♖xh5 leaves White on top) 22 axb5 axb5, as in Enders-Chekhov, Dresden 1985, White has probably nothing better than 23 f4 ♠xf4 24 ♖h5, ditching the sickly f-pawn to obtain a reasonable ending (Black remains active but all White's pieces are well placed, so it's about equal). Fritz instead suggests the aggressive 23 ♠a7 but then White's first rank may become open.

Another try is 17...♖g4 18 ♖1d2 (but not 18 ♖xe5? ♠xe5 19 ♖fd2 ♖b6+ 20 ♖f1 ♠h5 as in Jens-Ernst, Netherlands 1998, with a strong attack for Black) 18...♖h4+ 19 ♖g1 ♖xf3+ 20 ♖xf3 (also possible is 20 gxf3 ♖h3 21 ♖f1 ♖g5+ 22 ♖g3 g6 23 ♖h1 h5 24 ♖d3 ♠e6 25 ♠g1 ♖h7 with chances for both sides in Apicella-Hardarson, France-Iceland 1993, as all the pieces are in play and both kings must watch their step, though Krasenkov's 23...♖f4! looks like an improvement in this line) 20...♖h5 21 ♖d2 (21 ♖f1?! allows the enterprising exchange sacrifice 21...♠xf3!?, which, however, only earns half a point: 22 gxf3 ♖xf3 23 ♖f2 ♠e2 24 ♖d1 ♖g5+ 25 ♖g3 ♖e3+ 26 ♖f2 with a draw in Grünfeld-Mikhalevski, Israel 1992) 21...♖xf3 (21...♠xf3?! is well met here by 22 gxf3 ♖xf3 23 ♖f4) 22 gxf3 ♖xf3 23 ♖d3 ♖g4+ 24 ♖h1 g6 with unclear play in Ertl-Widenmann, correspondence 1988. White has two good bishops, but Black has adequate activity and material compensation. 17...♖xf3+ 18 gxf3 ♖xf3 19 ♖xf3 ♠xf3



Black has two pawns but White is ready to keep the black rooks at bay and control some key dark squares.

20 ♖f2

White has also investigated other bishop moves:

a) 20 ♖d4 ♖h3 21 ♖g3 g6 22 a4 ♖f7 2. axb5 axb5 24 ♠d1 h5 25 ♖d3 h4 with sharp play. The game Savon-Serper, Moscow 1990 continued 26 ♖xb5 hxg3 27 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 2! hxg3 ♠xg3+ 29 ♖h2 ♠f3 30 ♠e1+ followed by 31 ♠e3 with a drawn ending.

b) 20 ♖d1 ♠f7 21 ♖b3 c6 22 ♖d4 (2. ♖c5 allows Black's rook to use the e5-square after 22...♖h3 23 ♖e3 ♠e5; for instance, 2- a4 bxa4 25 ♖xa4 d4! 26 ♖xd4 ♠g5+ 27 ♖h c5, and Black held the initiative in Suetin Mikhalevski, Cappelle la Grande 1999 22...♖h3 23 ♖g3 h5! 24 ♖hx5 ♠e2 25 ♖g, ♠xb2 (Chekhov), when Black's active piece guarantee him the better chances.

20...♖h3 21 ♖d2

The continuation 21 ♖g3 g6 22 ♠d1 (2. a4 leads to equality after 22...♖f7 23 axb: axb5 24 ♖d1 ♠d3 25 ♖f1 according to Korchnoi) 22...c6 23 ♠d2 used to be played frequently but has disappeared because of 23...♠ef8! 24 ♖d3 h5! 25 ♖f1 (not 25 ♖xg6 in view of 25...h4 26 ♖f1 ♖g7 27 ♖h5 ♠3f5 25...♖xf1 26 ♖xf1 g5 and Black has some initiative.

21...♠f6 22 ♖d3

Exchanging a pair of rooks leads to equality after 22 ♠e1 ♠xe1+ 23 ♖xe1 ♠e1 (23...h5?! is a suggestion of Chekhov's) 24 ♖f2 ♠f6+ 25 ♖g3 ♠e6.

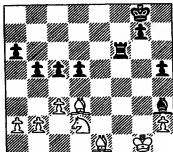
22...h5 23 ♠e1 ♠xe1+ 24 ♖xe1 c5

see following diagram

25 ♖h4?!

This allows Black the time to invade on g2 via a4! Instead Chekhov's suggestion 25 ♖g3 is judged as unclear by most commentators. Typically, the minor pieces can stop anything nasty happening but are too preoccupied to indulge in anything particularly constructive

themselves.



25...f4 26 g3 h4 27 a3 h4 28 d6
g4+ 29 f2 g2+ 30 e1

Not 30 e3?? d4+.

30...g1+ 31 f1

After 31 f2 d1 32 e4 f7 Black can gradually build up with ...f6, ...g7-g5 etc.

31...c4 32 e2 f7 33 e5 h1

The line 33...g2? 34 e2 g5 35 e3 would be an embarrassing way to lose!

34 d6 g1 35 e5 h1 36 d6 g5 37 f2 e6 38 b8 g4 39 e7?!

The resource 39 e3! b1 40 d1 g3+ 41 hxg3 hxg3+ 42 exg3 e5 43 e3 e2 44 e3 holds (Chelkhov). It's noteworthy that even after progressing so far, Black isn't yet winning.

39...f5 40 d6?! e1 f1 h3

Now White is getting squeezed.

42 e2 b1 43 g3 g1+ 44 h4 g2 45 d1 d4!

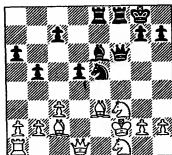
Decisively creating a passed pawn.

46 cxd4 e2 47 exg4+ e4 48 exh3 c3 49 g5 f2 50 a4 c2 51 e3 exh2 52 d7 b4 53 e2 g2+ 54 f6 f2+ 55 e6 f1 56 d5 b1 0-1

Game 4
Ivanchuk-Yusupov
Linares 1990

1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 e5 a6 4 e4 f6
5 0-0 e4 6 d4 b5 7 e3 d5 8 dx

e6 9 c3 e5 10 d2 0-0 11 e2
exf2 12 exf2 f6 13 exf6 exf2+ 14
exf2 exf6 15 f1 e5 16 e3 e8

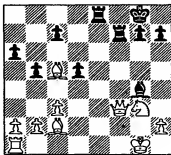


17 e5 exf3

The alternative 17...f7 has been largely abandoned, as this allows White to reinforce f3 with the knight and therefore recapture with a piece. The whole story has not yet been told, however, as the new move 19...e6 offers hope in an otherwise inferior line. Play might continue 18 d2 e4 19 g1 exf3+ (Samaritan's suggestion of 19...e6 was recently tried with some success: 20 b1 exf3+ 21 exf3 e3 22 exh7+ h8 23 gxf3 exf3 24 d3 e4 25 e1 d4! with complex play where Black held its own in Hydra-Eugen 7.2, World Computer Championship 1997) 20 exf3 exf3 21 gxf3 g5+ (or 21...exf3 22 exf3 exf3 23 g2 followed by 24 d3 defending against invasion on e2 and preparing active play with a4, which Korchnoi judges to be slightly better for White; however, this type of ending is no disaster for Black whose rooks are always menacing) 22 h1 h5 23 f1 exf3 24 g2 e7 25 d3 c6 26 a4 h4 27 h3 as in Poulsen-Tronhjem, correspondence 1984-85, when again White has everything under control and can start to create pressure against the black position. However, it's hard to see a convincing plan (if White goes for c6 with his rook then his first rank is weakened etc.).

18 ♖xf3 ♜f7 19 ♖g3

The fashionable 19 ♖g2 is covered in Games 5 and 6, whereas after 19 ♗d3 Black has 19...♗h3! with good play (ineffective is 19...♗g4 due to 20 ♗e2) as 20 ♗e2? ♜g5 21 ♖g3 will be killed by 21...d4! – a nice thematic trick; all three captures are hopeless. Instead, after 20 ♖g3 h5! 21 ♗f1 (again after 21 ♖xh5? ♜g5 22 ♖g3 then 22...d4! is too strong) 21...♗g4 22 ♗g2 h4 23 ♖f1 h3?! (it's better not to give the g3-square so readily; Yusupov suggests either 23...♜g6 or 23...♜c4 24 ♗d4 ♜g6 with attacking chances) 24 ♗h1 ♜e4, Short-Yusupov, Belgrade 1989, when White is fine but Black went on to win. 19...♗g4 20 ♖g1 ♜xf3 21 ♜xf3



21...♗xf3?!

This is considered a mistake by Yusupov who improved in a later game with 21...♜xf3! 22 ♖g2 h5 23 ♗g6 ♜e6 24 ♗xh5 ♜xg3+ 25 ♖xg3 ♗xh5, Leko-Yusupov, Horgen 1994, though with only slight winning chances for Black.

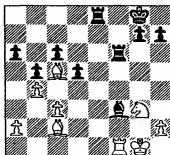
White can instead try the exchange of a pair of rooks with 22 ♜f1!? ♜xf1+ 23 ♖xf1 ♖f7 24 ♗d3 ♜e6 25 ♗d4 ♜h6 26 ♖g2 ♗h3+ 27 ♖f2 (Velickovic suggests 27 ♖g1 intending to play b2-b4, but Black can often react with ...a6-a5 followed by ...♜a6 when he shouldn't really be worse) 27...♗d7 28 ♖f1 a5 29 ♗e2 ½-½ Groszpetter-Gyimesi, Kecskemet 1994; the ending is balanced. 22 ♜f1 ♜f6

Black is now a little tangled up and this allows White some tactical chances, e.g. 22...♗g4? 23 ♗xh7+ or 22...♜f4 23 ♗d1 ♜c4 unpinning, but in unfavourable circumstances.

23 b4

This move, fixing the queenside, enables White to reinforce his dark-square control in the centre.

23...c6



24 ♗f5?

Inaccurate. Instead 24 ♗d4! exploits Black's problems on the f-file and wins the c-pawn: 24...♜f4 (or 24...♜ff8 25 ♗f5 ♗e4 26 ♗d7) 25 ♗f5 (intending 26 ♗d7) 25...♜c7 26 ♗c5 ♜e5 27 ♗d7 and so on.

24...♗e2 25 ♜e1 ♗h5

Taking the opportunity to release the white pressure, and now everything holds together.

26 ♜xe8+ ♗xe8 27 ♗e7 ♜h6 28 ♗g5 ♜d6 29 ♗e7 ♜h6 30 ♗c8?!

Naturally White has a draw with 30 ♗g5 but he tries for more by going for the a-pawn. This is a risky strategy as it leaves the bishop out of play whilst Black's king walks boldly into the centre stage.

30...♗f7 31 ♗c5 ♗e6 32 ♗xa6 ♗d7 33 ♗b7 ♖f7

Better than 33...♜e6? 34 a4 bxa4 35 b5 which gives dangerous play for White who would then be threatening 36 b6.

34 ♖e2 ♖e6 35 ♖d4+ ♖e5 36 ♖b3 ♖e4

37 ♖f2 ♗h3 38 ♝d4

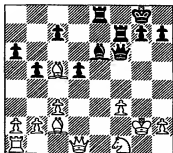
With c6 about to fall Black decides that bailing out with a draw is the safest course. Perhaps 38...♗d7, intending ...♗d3, was worth a try.

38...♙g6+ 39 ♖g3 ♗f6 40 ♖f2 ♙g6+ 41 ♖g3 ♗f6 42 ♖f2 ♙g6+ ½-½

An instructive tussle featuring an imbalance in material that is typical of Dilworth endings.

Game 5
Acs-Mikhailevski
Budapest 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♝c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♝xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♗c5 10 ♝bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2
♝xf2 12 ♙xf2 f6 13 exf6 ♖xf2+ 14
♝xf2 ♖xf6 15 ♖f1 ♖e5 16 ♖e3 ♙ae8
17 ♖c5 ♝xf3 18 gxf3 ♗f7 19 ♝g2



Making the king safer and defending the h3-square.

19...d4!

Experience suggests that this is the best approach. Instead 19...♗f5 20 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 21 ♝g3 ♙g5, as in Ilincic-Todorovic, Yugoslavia Championship 1990, leaves White with a comfortable edge, while after 19...h5 20 ♖d3 (20 ♖e3 looks too risky after 20...d4 21 cxd4 ♙g5+ 22 ♝f2 ♖h4+ 23 ♝g1 ♖h3) 20...♙g5+ 21 ♝h1 ♖f5 22 ♖xd5 c6 23 ♖xc6 ♖d7 24 ♙g6! ♖xc5 25 ♖b3 ♙ee7 26

♝g3 ♖e3 27 ♖xh5, as in Kupreichik-Shereshevsky, USSR 1978, White is essentially two pawns up and 27...♗e6 can be met by 28 ♝f5! ♙xf5 29 ♖xf5 ♖xb3 30 axb3.

Similar to the text is 19...♙g5+ 20 ♝h1 (20 ♝g3 d4 21 cxd4! ♖d5 22 ♖b3 ♙e3, as in Gara-Naes, Budapest 1999, which is not bad for Black) 20...d4.

20 ♖xd4

White has to be careful, e.g. 20 ♖xd4?? ♖xf3+ or 20 cxd4? ♖d5 21 ♝d2 ♙g5+ 22 ♝h1 ♙xf3! with the point 23 ♝xf3 ♙e1+.

20 ♝g3! is untried, when after 20...dxc3! (rather than 20...♖d5?! 21 ♖d3 ♖xf3 22 ♖xf3 ♖xf3+ 23 ♝g1 threatening 24 ♖b3 and also the simple recapture on d4; White obtains a clear advantage as here two pieces will be stronger than a rook and pawn and after 23...♖d5 24 ♖xd4 g6 25 a4 etc. Black has no entries and must wait while White improves his position) 21 ♖d4 ♖h4 22 ♖xc3 the struggle remains far from resolved.

20...♙g5+ 21 ♝h1

21 ♝g3 is featured in Game 6.

21...♖d5 22 ♖b3!?

22 ♝d2 ♙xf3 23 ♖xf3 is given as unclear by Korchnoi. After 23...♖xf3+ 24 ♝xf3 ♖h5 25 ♖b3+ ♝h8 26 ♙f1 ♙f8 27 ♖d1, for instance, things are still difficult to judge.

22...c5 23 ♖e3?!

Dubious, but better than 23 ♖xc5?? ♖xb3 24 ♖xb3 ♖xc5 or 23 ♖f2?? c4. However, 23 ♖xd5! is critical, e.g. 23...♖xd5 24 ♖f2 ♖xf3+ (24...♖c6 25 ♝g2) 25 ♖xf3 ♙xf3 26 ♖xc5 (26 ♝g2 ♝d3) 26...♙e2 27 ♙d1 ♝f7 and Black may have enough activity to hold the draw.

23...♖xb3 24 ♖xg5 ♖xd1 25 ♙xd1 ♙xf3

see following diagram

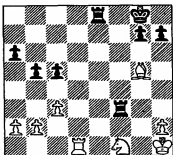
Simplification has left Black with only one pawn, but he cannot be held back from e2 and the rooks then prove to be too hard to restrain.

26 ♝g2 ♙f5 27 h4

If 27 ♖e3 then 27...♙xf1!

27...♞e2+ 28 ♜h3 ♟xb2 29 ♞e3 ♟ff2

Here White's pawns are split and his minor pieces have difficulty creating any real threats. Black's rooks are dominant.



30 ♜g3 ♟bd2 31 ♟e7f!

A tactical oversight which simplifies his opponent's task, but his position was pretty grim in any case.

31...♟fe2! 32 ♟xd2 ♟xe3+ 33 ♜f4 ♟xe7
34 ♟d6 ♟f7+ 35 ♜g4 ♟f6 36 ♟d8+ ♜f7
37 ♟c8 c4 38 a4 ♟g6+ 39 ♜f5 ♟f6+ 40
♜g4 ♟f1 41 axb5 axb5 42 ♟b8 ♟b1 43
♜f5 g6+ 44 ♜g5 ♟g1+ 45 ♜f4 h5 46
♟b7+ ♜f6 47 ♟b6+ ♜g7 0-1

Game 6
Kudrin-Kaidanov
USA Ch., Chandler 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♞f3 ♞c6 3 ♟b5 a6 4 ♟a4 ♞f6
5 0-0 ♞xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♟b3 d5 8 dxe5
♟e6 9 c3 ♟c5 10 ♞bd2 0-0 11 ♟c2
♞xf2 12 ♟xf2 f6 13 exf6 ♟xf2+ 14
♜xf2 ♟xf6 15 ♞f1 ♞e5 16 ♟e3 ♟ae8
17 ♟c5 ♞xf3 18 gxf3 ♟f7 19 ♜g2 d4!
20 ♟xd4 ♟g5+ 21 ♞g3

21 ♜h1 was considered in Game 5.

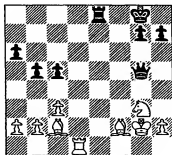
21...c5 22 ♟f2 ♟xf3!

After 22...♟d5?! then either 23 h4! or 23
♟c4 ♟xe4 24 fxe4 ♟xe4 25 ♟xc5.

23 ♜xf3

On 23 ♟xf3 Black wins the queen by
23...♟d5.

23...♟g4+ 24 ♜g2 ♟xd1 25 ♟xd1



Again White has three pieces for queen and pawn (another curious material asymmetry that we have seen on several occasions in the Dilworth). The fight for the initiative is important in the tactical play that follows.

25...g6

Not 25...h5?! due to 26 h4! ♟xh4 27 ♟h1 and 28 ♟xh5 with preference for White. Nor is 25...♟d8?! satisfactory as 26 ♟c3 ♟c7 27 ♟xc5! wins a pawn plus use of the d4-square for the bishop. However, a reasonable alternative to the text is 25...♟e2 26 h4 ♟g4 (or even 26...♟xf2+) 27 ♟d8+ ♜f7 28 ♟f5 ♟xh4 with complications.

26 a4?!

26 ♜f1 is less loosening.

26...♟e2 27 h4 ♟xf2+!? 28 ♜xf2 ♟xh4

White has rook, bishop and knight for the queen, but with a couple of pawns and a marauding queen Black is not worse.

29 ♜g2 ♟g5

Kaidanov suggests 29...bxa4 30 ♟d7 ♟g4 31 ♟a7 as a way to play for an advantage for Black. I agree as after 31 ..♟c4! Black seems to be better in a complex struggle.

30 axb5 axb5 31 ♟e4 ♟e3 ½-½

Summary

The Dilworth is an excellent gambit-style practical variation. For White the 15 ♖g1 of Game 1 is less precise than 15 ♘f1. After 15 ♘f1, 15...d4 (Game 2) looks bad, but the endings resulting from 15...♗e5 16 ♙e3 ♞ae8 17 ♖g1 in Game 3 are sound for Black.

The complications of the main line following 17 ♙c5 (Games 4-6) are unclear but Black has no reason to be worried if he remembers the liberating 17...♗xf3 18 gxf3 ♞f7 19 ♖g2 d4.

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♗f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♙e6
9 c3 ♙c5 10 ♗bd2 0-0 11 ♙c2 ♗xf2

12 ♞xf2 f6 13 exf6 ♙xf2+ 14 ♖xf2 ♞xf6 (D) 15 ♘f1

15 ♖g1 – Game 1

15...♗e5

15...d4 – Game 2

16 ♙e3 ♞ae8 17 ♙c5 (D)

17 ♖g1 – Game 3

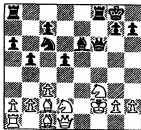
17...♗xf3 18 gxf3 ♞f7 19 ♖g2

19 ♗g3 – Game 4

19...d4 20 ♙xd4 ♞g5+ (D) 21 ♗g3

21 ♖h1 – Game 5

21...c5 – Game 6



14... ♞xf6



17 ♙c5



20... ♞g5+

CHAPTER TWO

9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♘bd2 0-0
11 ♖c2 f5



1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♗c5 10 ♘bd2 0-0 11 ♗c2 f5

In this chapter Black supports his centrally placed knight with the f-pawn rather than giving up two pieces for a rook with 11...♘xf2. After 11...f5 the knight is temporarily well placed, but can be undermined by a later f2-f3. The struggle in Games 8-12 revolves around White's efforts to play this move and Black's attempts to seek rapid activity, as he is only too aware that his knight's star role on the pivotal e4-square are numbered.

In Game 7 White prefers to capture en passant and the knight is forced back, but to a safe square. The opening of the f-file is not dangerous for Black.

It is more common for White to play 12 ♘b3, after which the theory goes very deep into the middlegame (the lines with queen and passed pawns against rook and two bishops for instance are mind-boggling – see Games 9-10). One prime cause of the lack of popularity of 11...f5 is that the forcing lines have been too well examined, but in my opinion there is still much that is unresolved.

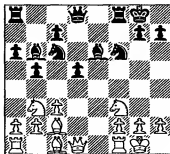
Some memory work is required to play these lines, but there is the reward that the chapter is full of fascinating tactical ideas.

Game 7 Apicella-Flear Clichy 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♗c5 10 ♘bd2 0-0 11 ♗c2 f5
12 exf6

This natural move has been abandoned as Black seems to obtain adequate play. The plan of undermining the knight with f2-f3 is more dangerous, as in Games 8-12.

12...♘xf6 13 ♘b3 ♗b6



14 ♘fd4?

A mistake. Better is 14 ♘g5! ♗g4 15 ♗xh7+! (Black has nothing to fear after 15

♖d3 h6 16 h3 hxg5 17 hxg4 ♘e4) 15...♗h8 and interesting complications have been analysed (mainly by Korchnoi) to equality:

a) 16 ♖d3 ♘e5 17 ♖g3 ♘h7 18 ♘xh7 (18 ♖xe5?! ♖e8! 19 ♖xe8 ♖axe8 gives excellent play for the pawn) 18...♗xh7 19 ♖xe5 ♖h4! (in the ending after 19...♖e8?! 20 ♖xe8 ♖axe8 21 ♖e3 ♖xe3 22 fxe3 ♖xf1+ 23 ♖xf1 ♖xe3 24 h3 White has the better minor piece) 20 ♖e3 ♖ae8 21 ♖xd5 ♖e2 22 ♖fe1 ♖xe3 23 fxe3 ♖f2+ 24 ♗h1 ♖xe3 and Black has a strong attack for the pawn.

b) Another try is 16 ♖c2 ♖d6 17 ♖f5 ♘e5 18 ♘d4 c5 19 ♘d6 ♘e4 20 ♖xe4 ♖xe6 21 ♖xd5 ♖f5 22 ♖e4 ♖g6, as in Derenkov-Radchenko, USSR 1963, when despite the two-pawn deficit Black is okay in view of 23 ♖e3 ♖ae8 24 ♖ae1 ♖xe4 25 ♖xe4 ♘f3+ 26 ♖xf3 ♖xf3 27 ♘xf3 with equal chances according to Korchnoi.

14...♘xd4 15 exd4 ♖d6 16 ♖d3

Black has free piece play and is ready to take over the initiative.

16...♖ae8

After 16...c6! 17 ♖g3 ♖d7 18 ♘c5 ♖xc5 19 dxc5 ♖f5, as in Lilienthal-Botvinnik, USSR (match) 1941, Black will obtain good knight against bad bishop and has a protected passed pawn to boot.

17 ♖g3 ♖d7 18 ♘c5?!

I prefer the neutral 18 ♖d2.

18...♖xc5 19 dxc5 d4

Here 19...♖f5 allows 20 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 21 ♖xc7, so perhaps Botvinnik's 16th move was more precise.

20 ♖g5

Now after 20 ♖d2? Black pushes with 20...d3!

20...♖c4 21 ♖xf6!

The lesser evil as 21 ♖fd1 ♖e2 and 21 ♖fe1 ♖xe1+ 22 ♖xe1 d3 are very difficult for White.

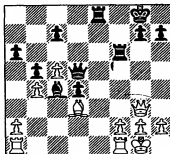
21...♖xf6

21...♖xf1? is punished by 22 c6! ♖f7 23 ♖xd4 ♖c4 24 ♖c5 and White takes charge.

22 ♖d3

Not 22 ♖fe1?! ♖xe1+ 23 ♖xe1 d3 as the d-pawn will make White suffer, but possibly 22 ♖b3?!

22...♖d5 23 b4



White can grab a pawn with 23 ♖xc4 bxc4 24 ♖xc7 d3, but Apicella was clearly worried about the potential strength of the d-pawn.

23...♖e5?!

I should probably have tried 23...♖xd3 24 ♖xd3 ♖c4 25 ♖g3 ♖xb4 26 ♖xc7 ♖ff8 when the d-pawn is much the stronger of the two passed pawns.

24 ♖fd1 h6 25 h4 ♖xd3 26 ♖xd3 ♖fe6 27 ♗h2?

Simpler was 27 ♖ad1 ♖e1+ 28 ♖xe1 ♖xe1+ 29 ♗h2 ♖e7 and White is holding his own.

27...♖h5 28 f3 ♖d8 29 ♖ad1 ♖xh4+ 30 ♖g1 ♖e2 31 a3 ♖f6?!

A poor choice as White has big problems after 31...♖e7!

32 ♖e1 ♖xe1+

Not 32...♖f4 in view of 33 ♖xh4!

33 ♖xe1 ♖f4 34 ♖e8+ ♗h7 35 g3 ♖f5

35...♖f7 is best met by 36 ♖e2! ♖f5 37 ♖e4 ♖d5 38 ♖g2! and 35...♖xf3?? loses to 36 ♖e4+ ♖f5 37 g4.

36 ♖e4 ♖e5 37 ♖g2! ♖xe4 38 fxe4 ♖f7 39 ♖xd4 ♖g6 40 ♖d8 ♖g5 41 ♖a8 ½-½

The rook ending is fine for White. Not for the first time in his career, Apicella has escaped!

Game 8
Nurkic-Flear
Asti 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♘bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2 f5
12 ♘b3 ♖b6 13 ♘bd4

Actually 13 ♘fd4 is more normal but this comes to the same thing. However, 13 a4 deserves a closer look: 13...♞d7 14 axb5 axb5 15 ♠xa8 ♠xa8 16 ♖c3 seems to be a simple and effective way for White to avoid lots of theory and obtain a good game, e.g. 16...b4 (instead 16...♖xe3 17 fxe3 b4 18 ♘fd4 bxc3 19 ♖xe4, as in Suetin-Fabisovich, USSR 1975, left White with a big advantage; note that he has use of the c5-square) 17 ♖xb6 cxb6 18 ♘bd4 ♘xd4 (18...bxc3? 19 ♖a4!) 19 cxd4 with a comfortable edge for White. Curiously this analysis by Korchnoi hasn't been tested in practical play.

13...♘xd4 14 ♘xd4 ♖xd4

The alternatives 14...♞e7 15 f3 ♘g5 and 14...♞d7 15 f3 ♘c5 16 ♘h1 ♠ae8 17 b4 leave Black with few prospects of creating counterplay.

15 cxd4

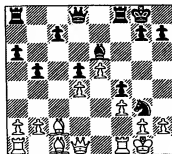
15 ♞xd4 is the subject of Games 11 and 12.

15...f4

Black has little choice; he has to find a solution to the threat of f3 and to seek some freedom for his bishop.

16 f3 ♘g3

see following diagram



17...♞h4 18 ♖d2

The continuation 18 ♞d3 ♠f5 (threatening 19...♞xh2+) 19 ♖f4 ♠xf4 20 hxg3 ♞xg3 21 ♞xh7+ ♘f7 is the most analysed variation. The further 22 ♠d1 (22 ♞h5+ ♘e7 23 ♞g6 is equal according to Korchnoi) 22...♠h4 23 ♞d3 c5 24 dxc5 ♠ah8 25 ♘f1 ♠h1+ 26 ♘e2 ♠xd1 27 ♖xd1 ♞xe5+ 28 ♘d2 ♞xb2+ 29 ♖c2 ♞b4+ 30 ♞c3 ♞f4+ 31 ♞e3 ♠h4 32 g4 ♞b4+, as in Napolitano-Sapundziew, correspondence 1973, is the last word. Despite considerable efforts I cannot find any improvements on this excellent correspondence game.

The fact that these complications are well analysed, difficult to remember and offer nothing for White are three good reasons why nobody plays the line any longer!

18...a5!?

A new idea, stopping the bishop from coming to b4 and preparing to switch the rook along the third rank.

Another try 18...♠ae8 led to a dramatic conclusion in Geller-Gi.Garcia, Bogota 1978: 19 ♖b4 ♠f7 20 a4 ♖c8 (20...♖d7, intending ...♠c6, was suggested by Filip) 21 axb5 ♠e6 22 bxa6?? ♞xh2+! (rather a sucker punch!). Instead, after 22 h3 White rebuffs the attack and stands better.

Alternatively, after 18...♘f5 19 ♖xf5 ♠xf5, as in Ajanski-Sapundziew, Gabrovo 1969, the position is unclear as the opposite-coloured bishops give attacking chances for

After 16...♘g5? 17 h4 ♘f7 18 ♖xf4 ♞xh4 19 ♞d2 (Keres) White's bishop pair has a free hand.

17 ♠f2

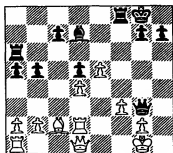
Taking on g3 is critical, see Games 9 and 10. The text is still, however, rather complex as the option of h2xg3 still remains.

Black but the c-file is a source for concern.

19 ♖e1 ♖a6 20 ♗d2 ♖d7

No prizes for guessing that I too was hoping to play ...♗xh2+!

21 hxg3 fxg3 22 ♖xg3 ♗xg3



23 ♖e1?!

23 ♖b3! was correct, when defence of the d-pawn would mean blocking the third rank for the rook. After the text, I saw that grabbing the pawn would give White activity on the f-file but decided that it was worth the risk.

23...♗xf3! 24 ♗xg3 ♗xg3 25 ♖f1 ♖a8
26 ♗df2 ♖e6 27 ♖f5 ♖xf5 28 ♗xf5 ♗g6
29 ♖f7 c6 30 ♖c7 ♖f8 31 ♖c1 ♖f4 32
♗1xc6 ♗xc6 33 ♗xc6 ♗xd4 34 ♖c5

Black has no chance of winning the ending without activating his king.

34...♗d1+

Uninspiring is 34...♗b4 35 ♗xd5 ♗xb2 36 a4 bxa4 37 ♗xa5 ♖a2 38 e6 ♗f8 39 ♖a7 and, since rook and g- and h-pawns versus rook and g-pawn is totally drawn, Black cannot make progress.

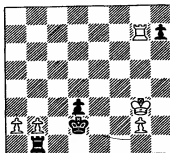
35 ♗h2 ♗f7! 36 ♗xb5 ♗e6!

Relying on the d-pawn being faster than the queenside, I'm not sure that Black should really win but the defence for White is not easy.

37 ♗xa5 ♗b1 38 ♗b5 d4 39 ♗b3 ♗xe5
40 ♗g3 ♗e4 41 ♗b7 d3 42 ♖e7+ ♗d4
43 ♗d7+ ♗e3 44 ♖e7+ ♗d2 45 ♗xg7

After all the hard work and a few risks I

now missed my chance.



45...♗h1?

Immediately after the game Nurkic showed me the win, which starts with 45...h5! and now one sample line is 46 a4 ♗c2 47 ♖c7+ ♗xb2 48 ♗b7+ ♗c2 49 ♖c7+ ♗d1 50 a5 ♖a1 51 ♖c5 d2 52 ♗f2 h4 53 ♗f1 ♖a4 54 ♗f2 ♖f4+ 55 ♗e3 ♗e1 56 ♗d5 ♖f6 and wins.

46 a4 ♗c2 47 ♖c7+ ♗xb2 48 ♗b7+ ♗c2
49 ♖c7+ ♗d1 50 a5 ♖h6 51 a6! ♗xa6 52
♗xh7 d2 53 ♗f4 ♖a4+ 54 ♗f5 ♗e2 55
♗h1 ♖h4 56 ♖a1 ♖h5+ 57 ♗f6 ♖c5 58
g4 d1 ♗ ½-½

Or 58...♖c1 when 59 ♖a2 holds.

Game 9

Tseshkovsky-Tal

USSR Ch., Leningrad 1974

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♖bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2 f5
12 ♖b3 ♖b6 13 ♖bd4 ♖xd4 14 ♖xd4
♖xd4 15 cxd4 f4 16 f3 ♖g3 17 hxg3

We saw what happened if the sacrifice is refused by 17 ♖f2 in Game 8. The capture on g3 leads to long forcing variations that are still rather unclear after years of research and practical testing.

17...fxg3 18 ♗d3

18 ♖e1! ♖h4 19 ♖e3 ♖h2+ 20 ♗f1
♖h3, as in Liberzon-Estrin, USSR 1940, may

just about be playable. Then Korchnoi's 21 ♖e2 is best, when the king hunt will be fun but not necessarily strong enough to win.

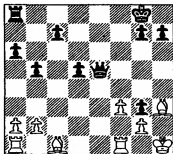
18...♖f5

The only good move as after 18...♖h4 19 ♖xh7+ ♖xh7 20 ♖xh7+ ♖xh7 21 ♖g5 White picks up the g-pawn. Even worse is 18...g6?? due to 19 ♖e3 ♖h4 20 ♖h6 and wins.

19 ♖xf5

Forced as 19 ♖d2?? allows a decisive combination with 19...♖h4 20 ♖e1 ♖h2+ 21 ♖f1 ♖xc2 22 ♖xc2 ♖xf3+.

19...♖xf5 20 ♖xf5 ♖h4 21 ♖h3 ♖xd4+ 22 ♖h1 ♖xe5



Black has queen and pawns for rook and two bishops and intends to get his passed d- (and sometimes c-) pawn going before White can develop and harmonise his forces. If given enough time White has a strong attack on the black king, but note the practical effect of the pawn on g3. White is thus occupied with the defence of his own king and will lose precious time neutralising the pest!

23 ♖d2

23 ♖b1 was suggested by Suetin but has never been tested. White holds the b-pawn, but this costs time so 23...c5 24 ♖d2 b4! then makes sense. The inferior 23 f4? ♖e2 24 ♖g1 g5 25 fxc5 ♖f8 left Black with a winning game in Kutianin-Estrin, USSR 1944.

23...♖xb2

23...c5 is considered by Korchnoi, who gives 24 ♖c3! d4 25 ♖a1 ♖f4 26 ♖e4 ♖h6 27 ♖a5, intending ♖c7, with an advantage.

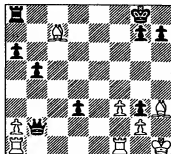
24 ♖f4 d4

24...c5? loses the important d-pawn after 25 ♖e6+ ♖h8 26 ♖xd5 ♖d8 27 ♖ad1 c4 28 ♖xg3 c3 29 ♖e5 b4 30 ♖b3 ♖d2 31 f4 (Black is going nowhere whilst White organises a direct assault on the black king) 31...h5 32 ♖b1 ♖f2 33 ♖fe1 ♖d2 34 ♖bd1 ♖b2 35 ♖d8+ ♖h7 36 ♖g8+ ♖g6 37 ♖d6+ ♖f5 38 ♖e6+ ♖g6 39 ♖d5+ ♖h7 40 ♖e4+ ♖g8 41 ♖g6 1-0 Smyslov-Reshevsky, USSR-USA 1945.

25 ♖xc7

25 ♖xg3 is covered in Game 10.

25...d3



26 ♖e6+?!

A mistake! White should pick off the g-pawn before trying to get an attack going. So correct is 26 ♖xg3 when 26...d2 27 ♖e6+ ♖h8 28 f4 ♖d8 29 ♖ad1 (29 f5 has been suggested by Korchnoi) 29...♖d3 30 ♖f2! (30 ♖f2? ♖f6 31 f5 g5! 32 ♖b6 g4 gives Black a dangerous attack) 30...♖b4 31 ♖h2 ♖e4 32 ♖g4 h5 33 ♖xh5 ♖e1+ 34 ♖f1 ♖h4 35 ♖f3 yielded equal chances in Baturinsky-Estrin, correspondence 1946. Lines that go so deep were ideal for correspondence players in long cold Russian winters!

26...♖h8 27 ♖ad1 ♖e8 28 ♖d7

After 28 ♖xd3?, 28...♖c2 forks three pieces.

28...♞e2 29 ♠xg3

29 ♠xd3? leads to mate after 29...♞xg2.

29...d2!

The tempting 29...♞xg2? allows a persistent attack on the queen with 30 ♞b1 ♞xa2 31 ♠a1 ♞e2 32 ♠fe1 etc.

30 f4 h5!

Freeing the back rank and stopping 31 ♠g4. The d-pawn has a significant cramping effect and White can find no release from its stranglehold.

31 ♠c6 ♞xa2 32 ♠f3 ♞e3 33 ♠h2 ♞c2

34 ♠f2 ♠d3 35 ♞e2 ♠d8 36 ♞e5

Tal points out that 36 ♠hxd2 ♞xd2 (not 36...♠xd2?) 37 ♞e8+ ♠h7 38 ♠e4+) 37 ♠xd2 ♠xd2 38 ♠xh5 b4 39 ♠e1 ♠d4 leaves Black with a winning ending.

36...b4 37 ♠h4 ♠d4 38 ♠xh5 b3 39 ♠f2 ♠xf4 40 ♠g3 ♠f6 41 ♠e2 b2 42 ♞e8+ ♠h7 43 ♠b8 ♞e4 0-1

If 43 ♠xb2 ♠h6+ 44 ♠g1 then 44...♞d4+ wins.

Game 10
Tiviakov-I.Sokolov
Groningen 1994

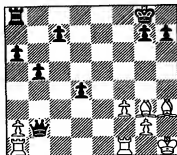
1 e4 e5 2 ♠f3 ♠c6 3 ♠b5 a6 4 ♠a4 ♠f6
5 0-0 ♠xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♠b3 d5 8 dxe5
♠e6 9 c3 ♠c5 10 ♠bd2 0-0 11 ♠c2 f5
12 ♠b3 ♠a7 13 ♠f6 ♠xd4 14 ♠xd4
♠xd4 15 cxd4 f4 16 f3 ♠g3 17 hxg3
fxg3 18 ♞d3 ♠f5 19 ♞xf5 ♠xf5 20
♠xf5 ♞h4 21 ♠h3 ♞xd4+ 22 ♠h1 ♞xe5
23 ♠d2 ♞xb2 24 ♠f4 d4 25 ♠xg3

see following diagram

25...c5

25...d3 is considered dubious because of 26 ♠ad1 d2 27 ♠e6+ ♠f8 28 ♠xc7 ♠e7 29 ♠d5 ♠f8 30 ♠a5 b4 31 ♠f2 ♠f6 32 ♞e2+ ♠f8 33 ♠c7 ♠h6+ 34 ♠h2 ♞d4 35 ♠exd2 ♞h4 36 g4 with advantage for White (Minev). Such astonishingly long variations were tested almost to exhaustion in the 1940s to 1970s, but in the computer age there may

still be some nuances waiting to be found, so good luck!



26 ♠e5

Here Tiviakov introduces a new idea, where for decades 26 ♠ae1 was the only move considered by theory. Then 26...d3 27 ♠c6+! (27 ♠e5 ♞xa2 28 ♠d6 ♞b2 29 ♠e6+ ♠h8 30 ♠e5 ♞d2 31 f4 c4 32 f5 led to a lively struggle in Boleslavsky-Botvinnik, Sverdlovsk 1943) 27...♠h8 28 ♠e5 is probably White's best (Pelitov-Sapundziev, Primorsko 1970), when Sapundziev proposes the repetition 28...♞c2 29 ♠c1 ♞e2 30 ♠ce1 ♞c2.

26...♞e8

Ivan Sokolov considers 26...♞a3? (intending ...d4-d3) to be too slow because of 27 ♠e6+ ♠h8 28 f4 and White pushes the f-pawn to open up the black king.
27 f4 ♞e2

Now 27...♞a3! makes more sense as the f-pawn doesn't advance so easily.

28 ♠ae1 ♞h5

Both 28...♞xa2 or 28...♞d2! are worth consideration.

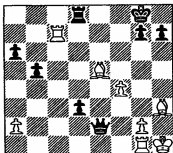
29 ♠e1! d3

29...g5? is neatly refuted by 30 ♠xc5 g4 31 ♠xd4.

30 ♠xc5 ♞e2 31 ♠g1 ♠d8

Unfortunately 31...d2! is strongly met by 32 ♠d5 and if 32...g5? 33 ♠c3 g4 then 34 ♠xg4! Instead, Sokolov suggests 31...h6! 32 ♠c7 g5 with an unclear game.

32 ♖c7!



White threatens mate starting with 33 ♖c6+.

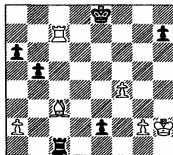
32...♗f8! 33 ♖xg7+ ♖e8 34 ♖g4?

A time-trouble error. Tiviakov later showed the way to keep an advantage: 34 ♖f6 d2 35 ♖xd8 d1♗ 36 ♖h4! (36 ♖xd1 ♗xd1+ 37 ♖h2 ♖xd8 38 ♖d7+ ♗xd7 39 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 should only be drawn) 36...♗dd2 37 ♖cc1, intending to come to the e-file. A unique material balance, but the key factor is that Black's king is too open.

34...♗xg4 35 ♖e1+ ♖e2 36 ♖xe2+?

A losing mistake. Either 36 ♖cc1 ♖f7 37 ♖xe2 dxe2 38 ♖e1 ♖xg7 or 36 ♖c3 ♗xe1+ 37 ♖xe1 d2 38 ♖xd2 ♖xd2 should be drawn.

36...dxe2 37 ♖c3 ♖d1+ 38 ♖h2 ♖c1!



The pin must have been overlooked by Tiviakov.

39 ♖c8+ ♖d7 40 ♖h8 ♖xc3 41 ♖xh7+ ♖d6 42 ♖h6+ ♖d5 43 ♖h5+ ♖d4 0-1

Naturally 44 ♖e5 is met by 44...♖e3. Sokolov's reintroduction of an almost forgotten line has unfortunately not inspired much of a following. The complications are fascinating, albeit hard to follow at times, but do promise Black quite reasonable chances.

Game 11

Short-Timman

El Escorial (12th matchgame) 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖e4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♖bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2 f5 12 ♖b3 ♖b6 13 ♖fd4 ♖xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 15 ♗xd4

In my opinion, the most challenging move.

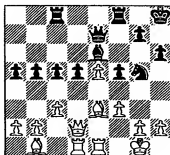
15...c5 16 ♖d1 h6

This innovation by Timman may be Black's best course of action. White has the bishop pair and slightly more options but the black position remains robust.

17 f3 ♖g5 18 ♖e3 ♖c8 19 ♖d2 a5

Speelman, who analysed the game in *Informator*, suggests 19...d4! 20 cxd4 cxd4 21 ♖f2 (not of course 21 ♖xd4? because of 21...♖xc2) as an alternative try.

20 ♖ad1 ♖e7 21 ♖b1 ♖h8 22 ♖f1



Short has developed his forces to active-looking squares, but has yet to threaten the

black defences.

22...♞c7 23 ♠f2 b4 24 h4 ♚h7 25 ♜d3 g5! 26 ♜a6! ♞fc8! 27 ♞e2

After 27 ♜d6 ♜f7 the queen is in danger of being trapped with ...♞c6.

27...♞c6 28 ♜d3

Short judges that taking on a5 is too risky (28 ♜xa5) in view of the reply 28...gxf4 and the queen is 'sidelined', whilst Black has attacking chances on the g-file.

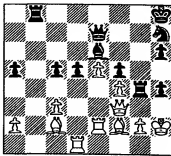
28...gxf4 29 f4 ♞g8

Timman later proposed to improve the position of his knight with 29...♚f8! 30 ♜f3 ♚g6 as on g6 it defends the h4-pawn and eyes f4.

30 ♜f3 bxc3 31 bxc3 ♞b6 32 ♠c2 ♞g4 33 ♚h2

33 ♠b3! In Speelman's opinion is best met by 33...♚f8!, intending to meet 34 ♠xd5 ♠xd5 35 ♠xd5 with the blockading 35...♚e6, when Black has the better minor piece.

33...♞b8



34 ♠xd5!

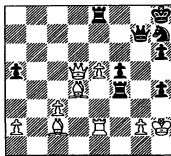
An enterprising exchange 'sac' to break up the centre and enhance the power of the bishops.

34...♠xd5 35 ♜xd5 ♠xf4 36 ♠xc5 ♜g7 37 ♠d4

White threatens to advance the e-pawn, exposing the black king and creating problems on the back rank.

37...♞e8

37...♜c7 is met by 38 ♜d6.



38 ♜d6!

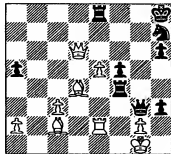
Short, in time pressure, misses the more precise 38 ♠a4 ♞e7 39 ♜d8+ ♜f8 40 e6+ ♚g8 41 ♜d6, tying Black up.

38...♜g3+?!

Speelman regards 38...♞f1! 39 e6 ♚f6, threatening 40...♚g4+ 40 g3 f4! 41 g4 ♜g8! (not 41...♚xg4+? 42 ♜g2! ♚e3+ 43 ♚h3 ♞h1+ 44 ♞h2 ♞xh2+, 45 ♚xh2 ♚g4+ 46 ♚h1) as unclear.

39 ♚g1 h3

Speelman suggests that Black could try for a draw with 39...♠xd4 40 cxd4 (40 ♜xd4 ♚g5) 40...♞c8, angling for ...♠xc2 and ...♞e1-g3+. I think the way to refute Speelman's idea is 41 ♜a6! to meet an eventual ...♞e1+ with ♜f1.



40 ♠f2?

White can win with 40 e6+! ♚g8 41 ♠f2 ♞g4 42 e7!! ♜xd6 43 ♠b3+ (Speelman).

40...h2+?

It was better to exchange into a worse, but tenable, ending after 40...♖xd4 41 ♗xd4 ♘g5 (41...♗xe5 42 gxf3!) 42 e6+ ♔g8 43 ♗f4 ♗xc4 44 ♖xf4 ♔g7 45 ♖xf5 hxg2 46 ♖a4 ♘xc6 47 ♔xg2 ♔f6! (Speelman).

41 ♔h1 ♖xd4

After 41...♖xf2? White picks up the queen after 42 e6+.

42 ♗xd4 ♘f6

42...♗xe5 falls short due to 43 ♖c2!

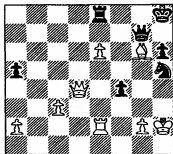
43 ♖e2! ♘h5

Or 43...♘g4 44 ♖xf5.

44 e6+ ♗g7 45 ♔xh2 f4?

Losing but 45...♗xd4 46 cxd4 ♘f4 47 ♖e5 ♖xe6 48 ♖xf5 ♖xe5 49 dxe5 is pretty hopeless anyway, as Speelman points out.

46 ♖g6! 1-0



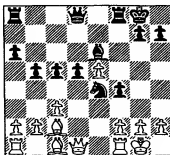
Timman resigned in view of 46...♘g3 47 ♖xe8 ♘xe2 48 ♗xg7+ ♔xg7 49 e7 ♔f6 50 ♖b5 winning the knight and the game. A fascinating combat.

The consensus view is that White probably has an edge in this variation, but further tests are needed to confirm this.

Game 12
Rantanen-Ornstein
Reykjavik 1981

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♘bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2 f5

12 ♘b3 ♖b6 13 ♘fd4 ♘xd4 14 ♘xd4
♖xd4 15 ♗xd4 c5 16 ♗d1 f4



This is the main line, but theory suggests that Black doesn't quite equalise.

17 f3 ♘g5

Here downright bad is 17...♘g3? 18 hxg3 fxg3 19 ♗d3 ♖f5 20 ♗xf5 ♖xf5 21 ♖xf5 ♗h4 22 ♖h3 and Black has a lost position. Compare with Games 9 and 10 where Black wins two central pawns.

18 a4

The main alternative is 18 b4 ♗b6 19 bxc5 ♗xc5+ 20 ♗d4 ♗xd4+ 21 cxd4, but this can be met by Suetin's instructive manoeuvre 21...♖c8! 22 ♖b3 ♖b7 and 23...♘e6 with a blockade.

Black's minor pieces both want to be on e6, and with the text move White aims to soften up the queenside before his opponent can get organised.

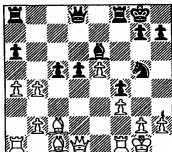
18...b4!

An improvement over Haag-Estrin, correspondence 1979, which was much better for White after 18...bxa4 19 ♖xa4 c4 20 b3 ♗b6+ 21 ♔h1 ♖ad8 22 ♗d4 ♗xd4 23 cxd4 ♖d7 24 ♖b4.

19 cxb4

19 h4, aiming for a comfortable advantage after 19...♘f7 20 ♖xf4 ♗h4 21 ♗d2, is met by 19...♘h3+! 20 gxf3 ♗xf4 21 ♖f2 ♖xf3 22 ♖h2 ♖ae8 23 ♗xd5+ ♔h8 24 ♖d2 ♖xe5! (Averbakh-Szabo, Zurich Candidates 1953) with a draw because of 25 ♗xe5 ♗g3+ 26

♖h1 ♜xf3+ 27 ♔g1 ♜g3+.



19...c4

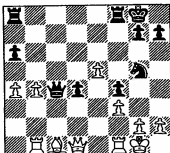
The two white bishops and Black's loose queenside enable White to keep an edge after 19...cxb4 20 ♖d4 ♕f5 21 ♖b3 ♘e6 22 ♜xd5 ♜b6+ 23 ♖h1 ♜ad8 (or 23...♖h8!) 24 a5 ♜b8 25 ♖d6! – Sapundiev) 24 a5! ♜c7 25 ♜c4 ♜xe5 26 ♖xf4 ♜xb2 27 ♜ae1, as in Nokso Koivisto-Kaunonen, correspondence 1984.

20 b3!

20 ♖d4 can be met with 20...♕f5! 21 ♖xf5 ♜xf5 22 ♜d1 ♘c6 23 ♜xd5 ♜b6+ 24 ♖h1 ♜d8 when White has to bail out for equality by 25 ♜xe6+ ♜xe6 26 ♜xd8+ ♖f7 27 ♕d2, as in Varjomaa-Zerpe, Correspondence 1979.

20...d4 21 bxc4 ♖xc4 22 ♖b3 ♖d5 23

♖xc4 ♜xc4 24 ♜b1



This position shouldn't be too bad for Black.

24...♖h8?

Circ's suggestion of 24...♘e6! 25 ♜b3 ♜fc8 is critical. White has an extra pawn and therefore the better game, but I spent some time looking at this position some years ago and concluded that Black's well-placed pieces give him excellent drawing chances, for instance 26 ♜d1 ♜xb3 27 ♜xb3 ♜c4 28 ♕d2 ♜ac8 29 ♖f2 ♖f7 and it's hard to find anything convincing for White.

25 ♜b3 ♜e2?

25...♜ac8 is best but 26 b5 is difficult for Black.

26 h4 ♘f7 27 ♖xf4 1-0

A collapse by Black at the end.

Summary

Against 11...f5 White does best to play 12 ♘b3 as capturing en passant (Game 7) liberates Black's game.

After 12...♖b6 13 ♗fd4 ♘xd4 14 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 there is a major dichotomy at move fifteen. The heavily analysed 15 cxd4 (Games 8-10) leads to wild variations but no obvious advantage to White. Instead I recommend 15 ♖xd4 c5 16 ♖d1 when the bishop pair offers White the slightly better options and less memory work. In Game 11 Timman's 16...h6 may not solve all of Black's problems but offers him hope for a rich middlegame where he is not without chances.

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♗f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6
9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♘bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2 f5

12 ♘b3

12 exf6 – Game 7

12...♖b6 13 ♗fd4 ♘xd4 14 ♘xd4 ♖xd4 (D) 15 cxd4

15 ♖xd4 c5 16 ♖d1

16...h6 – Game 11

16...f4 – Game 12

15...f4 16 f3 ♗g3 (D) 17 hxg3

17 ♗f2 – Game 8

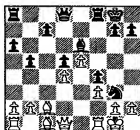
17...fxg3 18 ♖d3 ♖f5 19 ♖xf5 ♗xf5 20 ♖xf5 ♖h4 21 ♖h3 ♖xd4+ 22 ♖h1 ♖xe5 23
♖d2 ♖xb2 24 ♖f4 d4 (D) 25 ♖xc7

25 ♖g3 – Game 10

25...d3 – Game 9



14...♖xd4



16...♗g3



24...d4

CHAPTER THREE

9 c3 ♗c5! 10 ♖bd2 0-0
11 ♗c2 ♗f5



1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♗c5 10 ♖bd2 0-0 11 ♗c2 ♗f5

This is the most solid and prudent choice here and was very popular amongst the world's elite in the early 1980s. Black supports his knight as in the last chapter, but this time with the bishop, which is no longer tied to the defence of the d5-pawn. By not committing his f-pawn, Black takes less positional risks than in the previous chapter and retains the important option of a later ...f7-f6 to challenge White's key e-pawn. For his part, White can again aim for f2-f3 to undermine the knight.

Although White has several ways of handling the position the critical lines are dealt with in Games 19-21, where Black just about holds his own. The best plan in the main line is to push the a-pawn to dislodge the knight from b3 and then create problems for White with ...a4-a3 (weakening the c3-square), followed by hitting at the centre with a timely ...f7-f6.

Game 13
Leko-Piket
Dortmund 1994

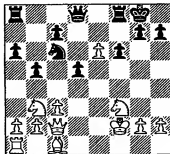
1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6

5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♗c5 10 ♖bd2 0-0 11 ♗c2 ♗f5
12 ♖b3 ♗xf2+!?

A 'delayed Dilworth' popularised by Murey and then Piket. Although considered less effective than the normal Dilworth (Chapter 1), as White can keep the e-file closed with 16 e6, it certainly seems popular and has the advantage of surprise-value.

The alternatives are 12...♗g4! (Game 14) and the normal 12...♗g6 (Games 15-21).

13 ♗xf2 ♖xf2 14 ♖xf2 ♗xc2 15 ♖xc2
f6 16 e6



In this way, White earns enough time to complete his development. Black obtains a second pawn but lacks the active play for his rooks associated with the normal Dilworth.

The alternatives are as follows:

a) 16 ♖f5 ♜xe5 17 ♖c3 ♖e8 18 ♞d1 c6 19 ♖c5 ♜c4 was satisfactory for Black in Ljubojevic-Piket, Monaco 1994.

b) 16 exf6 is a poor psychological choice. Although it is not bad in itself it gives Black the fun he wants! For example, 16...♖xf6 17 ♜g1 ♜e5 18 ♖d1 ♖ae8! 19 ♖xd5+ ♜h8 20 ♖d2 ♜xf3+ 21 gxf3 ♖e2 and Black had dangerous play in Seirawan-Zak, Lugano 1989.

16...♖d6 17 ♖e3 ♖xe6 18 ♜bd4

Exchanging off Black's last minor piece and thereby limiting any counter-chances.

White got into trouble after 18 ♜c5 in Apicella-Murey, Paris 1989, but only because of later errors: 18...♖e7 19 ♖b3 (19 ♖d4 was better according to Korchnoi who gives the position as equal) 19...♖f7 20 ♞d1 ♜e5! 21 ♖xd5? (a bad error; 21 ♖xd5 ♜g4+ 22 ♜e2 ♖ae8 23 ♞d3 was still okay) 21...♜g4+ 22 ♜e2 ♖ae8 23 ♖xf7+ ♖xf7 24 ♞d3 ♖fe7 and Black was winning.

18...♜xd4 19 ♜xd4

The knight recapture is the most logical, though 19 ♖xd4 was successful in the game Jirovsky-Macharacek, Czech Republic 1998, when after 19...♖fe8 (19...♖ae8!?) 20 ♖e1 ♖g4 21 ♖d2 ♖e4? White won an important pawn with 22 ♖xf6! as the d5-pawn is hanging. Black would have had a good position after 21...c6 or 21...♖e1 22 ♖xe1 ♜f7.

19...♖e5

19...♖d6?! just loses time: 20 ♜f5 ♖e5 (20...♖xh2? 21 ♜g3 threatens 22 ♞h1) 21 ♜g1 ♖fe8 22 ♞f1 ♖c4 23 ♖f2 ♖ad8 24 ♖d4 and White had a strong attack in Morovic-Murey, Thessaloniki Olympiad 1984.

20 ♜f3

Maybe White should consider 20 ♜f5 anyway, even if it doesn't gain a tempo (see the previous note).

20...♖h5

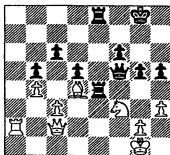
20...♖d6 21 b4 is given as slightly better for White by Morovic, as indeed is the

continuation of the main game, though Black never seems in any danger.

21 a4

If the black queen wants to go to the kingside then it's time to play on the other wing.

21...c6 22 b4 ♖fe8 23 ♖d3 ♖ad8 24 h3 ♖e4 25 axb5 axb5 26 ♖d4 ♖de8 27 ♖a2 ♖f5 28 ♖c2 h5 29 ♜g1 g5!



Giving sufficient counterplay to keep White occupied.

30 ♖f2 ♖e6 ½-½

This variation is not as dangerous as the real Dilworth, but the rook and two pawns seem to be sufficient compensation for two minor pieces (if Black isn't too passive) and therefore the line is playable.

Game 14

Karpov-Korchnoi

Baguio City (14th matchgame) 1978

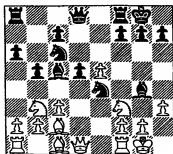
1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6 5 0-0 ♜xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♜bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2 ♖f5 12 ♜b3 ♜g4?!

Nowadays 12...♖g6 (Games 15-21) has become standard.

13 h3!

With this move Karpov introduces a convincing plan. However, in earlier games from the match Karpov had failed to obtain any real advantage out of the opening: 13

Qxc5 Qxc5 14 Ne1 d4 (or even 14...h5 15 h3 Ne8 16 f4 Qe6 17 d2 Qc5 18 f4 Qe6 19 d2 Karpov-Korchnoi, Baguio City [4th matchgame] 1978, which was agreed drawn immediately) 15 h3 h5 16 cxd4 xf3 17 Wxf3 Qxd4 18 Wc3 Wd5 19 e3 Qxc2 20 Wxc2 Qd3 21 Ne1 Nfd8 22 Wxc7 Wxe5 23 Wxc5 Qxe5 24 b3 f6, Karpov-Korchnoi, Baguio City (2nd matchgame) 1978, which was drawn a few moves later.



13...h5

13...xf3 14 gxf3 Qxf2 represents a more interesting try. Black will then obtain two pawns and an unbalanced position.

14 g4! f6 15 e4

Introducing a forcing sequence that leaves White with a safe edge in the ending.

15...dxe4 16 Qxc5 exf3 17 f4 Wxd1 18 Nxd1 Qd8 19 Nd7 Qe6

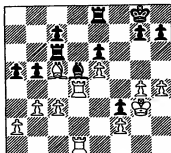
Black exchanges knights and so the remaining pair of minor pieces are opposite-coloured bishops. This is often a drawish factor, but here Black's pawn structure is full of weak points and the defence is unpleasant. 20 Qxe6 fxe6 21 e3 Nac8 22 Nfd1

A later game, Timoschenko-Sideif Zade, USSR 1979, continued 22 e3 Nfe8 23 Ne1 h5 when White should play 24 gxh5 exh5 25 wh2 with continuing pressure.

22...e4 23 e3 Nfe8 24 N7d4 d5 25 b3 a5 26 wh2 Na8 27 wg3 Na6?

Korchnoi fails to anticipate Karpov's plan. Better was 27...e6 or 27...a4.

28 h4 Nc6



29 Nxd5!

Black's bishop was doing a good job to hold everything together, so by sacrificing the exchange White eliminates the main barrier. Now Black is struggling.

29...exd5 30 Nxd5 Nce6 31 d4 c6 32 Nc5 Nf8

Keene suggests 32...Nd8 33 wf3 Nd5 as Black's best chance of holding the game. The exchange of rooks would avoid White's plan of the game.

33 a4!

Winning either the a- or f-pawns and then activating either the king or rook.

33...bxa4 34 bxa4 g6 35 Nxa5 Nee8 36 Na7 Nf7 37 Na6 Nc7 38 e3 Ncc8 39 d6 Na8 40 Nxc6 Nxa4 41 wf3 h5 42 gxh5 gxh5 43 c4 Na2 44 Nb6 wf7 45 c5 Na4 46 c6 fe6 47 c7 fd7 48 Nb8 Nc8 49 we3 Nhx4 50 e6+! 1-0

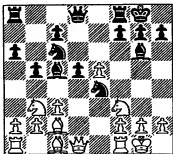
After 50...fxe6 then 51 e6g3! wins a rook.

A game of historic importance. Indeed as a result of Karpov's team's preparation 12...g4 has been totally replaced by 12...e6g.

Game 15 Van der Wiel-Korchnoi Wijk aan Zee 1983

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 e5b5 a6 4 e4a4 Qf6
5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 e4b3 d5 8 dxe5

e6 9 c3 e5 10 Qbd2 0-0 11 e2 f5
12 Qb3 g6



13 a4

Here, as in a number of lines, White's a2-a4 push represents a sideline with some bite. Sometimes b5 or a6 become target points and the rook on a1 has an early entry into the game. The usual 13 Qf4 is seen in Games 18-21, while White's other main alternatives 13 e4 and 13 Qbd4? are covered in Games 16 and 17 respectively. Early simplification lacks bite: 13 Qxc5 Qxc5 14 e6 hxg6 15 e3 Qe6 16 Wd2 Wd7, Radulov-Suradiradja, Indonesia 1982, and 13 We2 Ne8 14 Qxc5 Qxc5 15 e6 hxg6 16 e5 Wd7 17 Nad1 Qe6 18 Wd2 Qxg5 19 Wxg5 We7, Ljubojevic-Timman, Hilversum 1987, both give comfortable equality for Black.

Sharper is 13 e6! f5 (White's idea is that 13...fxe6? 14 e4 dxe4 15 Qxc5 exf3 16 Qxe6 gives Black the choice of which pawn to lose, but 13...e6 instead looks playable) 14 Qxc5 (14 e4 fxe4 15 Qxc5 exf3 16 e7 Qxe7 17 Qe6 Wd7 18 Qxf8 Nxf8 19 h3 e4 gave Black a strong attack in Losakov-Ablouhov, correspondence 1987) 14...Qxc5 15 e6 Wd6 16 e7 Nfe8 17 Nc1 Qe4 18 e3 e7 19 a4, when Korchnoi judges the position as unclear. This idea requires further work as this long-forgotten sideline may prove dangerous for the unwary.
13...e6 14 Qbd4

The straightforward 14 axb5 axb5 15 Nxa8 Nxa8 16 Wxd5 is not good as 16...Qxc3! 17 bxc3 e2 18 Wxb5, as in Tukmakov-Savon, USSR Championship 1969, is a shade better for Black (better bishop, pawn structure) after 18...e2+ 19 Nxf2 Nb8 20 We2 e3.

14...Qxd4

In the game Ivanovic-Todorovic, Yugoslavia 1990, Black played 14...Wd7 immediately and after 15 e3 Qa5 16 axb5 axb5 17 Qh4 Qc4 18 Qxg6 hxg6 19 Nxa8 Nxa8 20 e6 fxe6 21 e4 a draw was agreed.

15 Qxd4 Wd7

Black fell into a standard trap in Timman-Geller, Moscow 1981: 15...c5? 16 Qc6 when 16...Wd7 fails to 17 Wxd5 Wxd5 18 Qe7+.

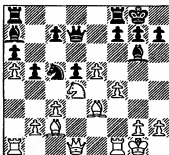
16 e3 Qc5

The tempting 16...c5 is no good as after 17 Qe2 the knight on e4 is threatened with f3.

17 a5

Since the exchange on b5 doesn't really lead anywhere, White decides to gain a tempo and some space. Now, which is the most vulnerable pawn, White's on a5 or Black's on a6?

17...e4 18 f4



Black has to avoid the pawn roller, hence his choice of plan.

18...e2 19 Qxc2 f6! 20 exf6 Nxf6 21 e1 c6

Korchnoi later preferred 21...Qe4 22

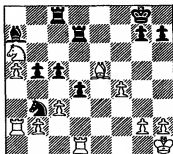
♙xa7 ♞xa7 23 ♖b4 ♜d6 24 ♜c2 ♞a8 25 ♖d3 c5 with, in his opinion, equal chances. Black starts to get his majority rolling and has a good knight on e4, but White has the e5-outpost. However, I have a slight preference for Black as e5 can be undermined and the a5- and f4-pawns are potential weaknesses.

22 ♚d4 ♞f7 23 ♖b4

Interesting is 23 ♖e3 aiming for e5 via g4.
23...♜d6 24 ♜g4 ♖b3 25 ♚e5 ♜d7 26 ♜xd7 ♞xd7 27 ♞a2

A bit awkward but a5 needs some support. Now White will pick up a pawn but at a certain cost...

27...c5 28 ♖xa6 ♞c8 29 ♜d1 d4



With the knight on a6 and the rook on a2 rather out of touch, the advance of the d-pawn creates danger for White.

So the a6-pawn proved to be the most fragile of the a-file pawns, but that is certainly not the end of the story!

30 ♞a3!

Van der Wiel rejected 30 cxd4 because of 30...cxd4 31 ♞a3 ♞c1 32 ♞xc1 ♖xc1 33 ♞a1 ♖b3 34 ♜d1 ♖xa5 with a comfortable edge for Black. Now the pot boils over!

30...dxc3! 31 ♞xd7 c2 32 h4 c1♜+ 33 ♜h2

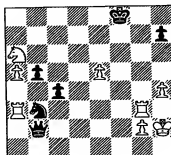
At present Black has queen for rook but various bits are hanging.

33...c4 34 ♞xa7 ♞e8 35 ♞xg7+ ♜f8 36 ♞g3 ♞xe5

In time trouble, Korchnoi sensibly

eliminates the monster bishop.

37 fxex5 ♜xb2



38 ♖c7??

A blunder. After 38 ♞axb3 cxb3 39 ♖c5 ♜a1 40 ♖xb3 ♜xe5 41 a6 ♜e7! (Korchnoi) the position should be drawn.

38...♜xa3 39 a6 ♜a5 40 ♞f3+

If 40 a7 then Korchnoi analyses 40...♖d2! (40...♜xa7 41 ♖e6+ ♜e7 42 ♞g7+ ♜xe6 43 ♞xa7 is no longer clear, but probably drawn) 41 a8♜+ ♜xa8 42 ♖xa8 ♖f1+ 43 ♜h3 ♖xg3 with a clear advantage for Black. This looks winning to me, e.g. 44 ♖c7 c3! 45 ♖e6+ ♜f7! 46 ♖d4 ♖f5! 47 ♖c2 ♜e6.

40...♜e7 41 ♞g3 ♖c5 42 a7

Winning back the queen but Black still wins the game.

42...♜xa7 43 ♞g7+ ♜d8 44 ♖e6+ ♖xe6

45 ♞xa7 c3 46 ♞a6 c2 47 ♞c6 ♖d4 48

♞c3 ♜e7 0-1

Intending to follow up with ...b5-b4 and ...b4-b3 etc.

A fascinating game in which Black's queenside pawns played a major part.

Game 16
Short-Timman
Tilburg 1988

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♚b5 a6 4 ♚a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♚b3 d5 8 dxe5
♚e6 9 c3 ♚c5 10 ♖bd2 0-0 11 ♚c2 ♚f5
12 ♖b3 ♚g6 13 ♚f4

White decides to support the advanced e-pawn before conducting an active plan.

13...♟b6 14 a4

Here 14 ♞fd4 should be met by 14...♞e7 (instead 14...♞xd4 15 cxd4 f6 16 ♟c1 ♟e7 17 ♟xe4 ♟xe4 18 ♞c5 fxe5 19 ♟xe5 ♟f7 20 ♟g4, as in Popovic-Skembris, Bar 1997, turned out to be passive for Black).

14...♟d7

Black can seriously consider 14...b4 when 15 a5 ♟a7 16 ♞fd4 ♟e8! looks satisfactory as 17 ♞xc6 ♟xc6 18 cxb4?? (on 18 ♞d4 then 18...♟b7 holds everything together) 18...♞xf2! wins.

15 axb5 axb5 16 ♟xa8 ♟xa8

Early simplification doesn't mean peaceful intentions on Short's part! He aims to press against the weak points, such as b5, on Black's queenside but Timman is ready.

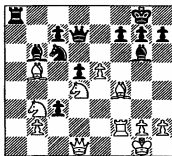
17 ♞fd4 b4

Possibly 17...♞d8, intending a quick ...c7-c5, was not bad either.

18 ♟d3

The threat is 19 ♟b5 but Black ignores it! This is a sign that he already stands well.

18...bxc3! 19 ♟b5 ♞xf2! 20 ♟xf2



and now...

20...♞xd4! 21 ♟xd7

True, after 21 ♞xd4 ♟xb5 22 ♞xb5 cxb2 Black is a queen down, but his b-pawn wins the game as 23 ♞c3 ♟a1 is hopeless for White.

21...♞xb3 22 bxc3

22 ♟xb3?? allows mate by 22...♟a1+.

22...♟a1 23 ♟xa1 ♞xa1 24 ♟c6 ♟e4

The smoke clears and the further ...♞xf2+ will leave Black a pawn up. Short manages to defend precisely by exploiting the absence of the knight from the centre.

25 c4 ♞c2 26 ♟d2!

The obvious 26 ♟xd5 ♟xd5 27 cxd5 ♞b4 28 d6 (or 28 ♟f1 ♟xf2 29 ♟xf2 ♞xd5) 28...cxd6 29 exd6 ♞d3 30 ♟g3 ♟f8 will leave Black with king and three pawns against king and two on the same side, which is standard win that can be found in all endgame books, so Short delays the knight's return temporarily before taking on d5.

26...♞a3 27 ♟xd5 ♟xd5 28 cxd5 ♞c4 29 ♟c3

Black still has slight chances but White has managed to get his pawn back and should now hold the game.

29...♟f8 30 g4 ♟e8 31 h4 g6 32 ♟g2 ♟xf2 33 ♟xf2 ♞b6 34 d6 c6

Black can again win a pawn by 34...cxd6 35 exd6 ♟d7 36 ♟b4 ♞c4 but then White is in no real danger as this three vs. two is drawn if White avoids getting his pawns fixed on dark squares.

35 ♟f3 ♟d7 36 ♟d4 ♞d5 37 h5 ♟e6 38 ♟e4 ♞b4 39 ♟c3 ♞d5 40 ♟d4 ♞b4 41 ♟c3 ♞d5 ½-½

Game 17

Zso.Polgar-Van der Sterren

Wijk aan Zee 1990

1 e4 e5 2 ♞f3 ♞c6 3 ♟b5 a6 4 ♟a4 ♞f6 5 0-0 ♞xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♟b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♟e6 9 c3 ♟c5 10 ♞bd2 0-0 11 ♟c2 ♟f5 12 ♞b3 ♟g6 13 ♞bd4!?

At first sight this looks like a case of the wrong knight!? White's normal plan after 13 ♞fd4 (see Games 18-21) is to have the option of f2-f3 hitting the black knight which may be embarrassed for a retreat square.

13...♞xd4

After 13...♟xd4 14 cxd4! (14 ♞xd4

transposes to Game 18) could be awkward for the knight on e4, but only after significant preparation. It would probably be more fruitful for White to try to seek action on the c-file whilst Black will counter with ...f7-f6 and/or a timely ...c7-c5.

14 Qxd4

Apicella-Korneev, Paris 1991, took a different course: 14 cxd4 Qb6 15 Qc3 Nc8 16 b4 (Black was ready for counterplay with ...c7-c5, when the isolated d-pawn would be compensated by the loose e-pawn and the active disposition of Black's army) 16...We7 17 a3 a5 18 bxa5 Qxa5 19 Qb3 Nf8 with chances for both sides.

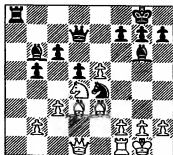
14...Qb6 15 Qe3

15 Qc6 can be met by 15...We8 16 Wxd5 Qxf2 or even by 15...Qxf2! immediately.

15...Ne8?

This turns out simply to lose time, but Black wanted to avoid the well-known tactical trap 15...c5? 16 Qc6 Wd7 17 Wxd5! More constructive were 15...We8 16 f4 (or 16 f3 Qd6) 16...f6 or 15...Wd7 which he has to play soon anyway.

16 a4 Wd7 17 axb5 axb5 18 Nxa8 Nxa8 19 Qd3 c6



Now that the queenside is stabilised Zsofia turns her attention to the other wing. When White gets the f-pawn going, the bishop on g6 is badly placed.

20 f4! Ne8 21 Wh1

Threatening 22 f5 Qxd4 23 fxg6 Qxe3

(it's no longer check) 24 gxf7+.

21...f6?

This fails tactically. He should have tried 21...Qxd4 22 Qxd4 Qf5 trying to block the kingside majority's advance.

22 e6! Nxe6

If Black moves the queen then 23 f5 traps the unfortunate bishop.

23 f5!

Van der Sterren was probably expecting 23 Qxe6 Qxe3 24 Qxe4 Qxe4 when Black has good compensation, in the form of his dynamic bishop pair, for the exchange.

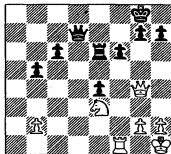
23...Qxf5

Even worse is 23...Qxd4? 24 fx6.

24 Qxf5 Qxe3 25 Qxe3 Qxc3 26 Wg4!

Precisely played. Less good is 26 bxc3 Qxe3 when with three pawns for the piece there are fair drawing chances.

26...Qe4 27 Qxe4 dxe4



28 Nxf6!

A nice move on the theme of 'pin and win'.

28...Nd6 29 Wxd7 Nxd7 30 Nxc6 Nd3

31 Nc3 Nd2 32 Nc2 Nd3 33 Ne2 1-0

Game 18

J. Polgar-Hellers

Wijk aan Zee 1990

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qb5 a6 4 Qa4 Qf6

5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Qb3 d5 8 dxe5

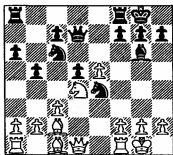
Qe6 9 c3 Qc5 10 Qbd2 0-0 11 Qc2 Qf5

12 ♞b3 ♟g6 13 ♞fd4 ♟xd4 14 ♞xd4

The most testing move here is 14 cxd4, when White then has the bishop pair, threats of f2-f3 and play on the c-file and against Black's queenside. In Games 19-21 we shall see how Black can defend this position.

14... ♞d7

Here 14... ♞xe5? fails to 15 f4 ♞c4 16 f5 trapping the bishop.



15 a4

A speculative pawn sacrifice from the world's top female player who is typically in an aggressive mood. Alternatives give Black a satisfactory game:

a) After 15 ♞xc6 ♞xc6 16 ♟e3 ♞fe8 Black has done well in practical play: 17 f3? (or 17 f4? ♞xc3! Korchnoi(!)-Karl, Switzerland 1982) 17... ♞c3! Spelman-Timman, London (6th matchgame) 1989, and now after 18 bxc3 ♞xc3 19 ♟d4 ♞xc2 20 ♞xc2 ♞xc2 21 ♞fc1 ♟d3 22 ♞xc7 White has some drawing chances.

b) 15 f4 is no longer a feared weapon since Korchnoi found the best course: 15... ♞xd4 16 cxd4 f6! 17 ♟e3 fxe5 18 fxe5 ♞xf1+ 19 ♞xf1 ♞f8 20 ♞e2 ♞e6 21 ♞f1 ♞xf1+ ½-½ Leko-Korchnoi, Leon 1994.

15... ♞xe5

Now that Black's queen covers f5 this move is playable.

16 f4 ♞c6 17 ♞xc6 ♞xc6 18 f5

Persistent. Black's queen has been displaced and this thematic move is on again.

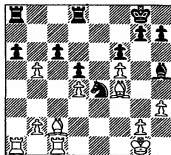
18... ♞b6+?!

A small but significant mistake. In the game Black will be obliged to capture on d4 (or allow the pawn-crippling 20 ♞xb6) when White is able to put the c-file to good use. Therefore Polgar suggests 18... ♞c5+ 19 ♞d4 ♟h5, when White has compensation for the pawn but no more.

19 ♞d4 ♞xd4+ 20 cxd4 ♟h5 21 ♟f4 c6 22 h3 f6

Black secures a retreat for his bishop. However, White's pressure against the fragile black queenside pawns is worth more than the invested pawn.

23 ♞fc1 ♞f8 24 axb5



24... cxb5

Perhaps Hellers should have chosen 24... axb5!? 25 ♞xa8 ♞xa8 26 ♟xe4 (not 26 ♟b3 as 26... ♟e8 holds everything together) 26... dxe4 27 ♞xc6 ♟f7, when the presence of opposite-coloured bishops offers Black good drawing chances.

25 ♟b3 ♟f7 26 ♞c7 ♞d6 27 ♟xd6 ♞xd6 28 ♞b7

The threat is 29 ♞xb5 and unfortunately for Black 28... ♟e8 is met by 29 ♞e1 with the deadly threat of doubling on the seventh.

28... ♞ad8 29 ♞a7 h5 30 ♞1xa6 ♞xa6 31 ♞xa6 ♞e8

After 31... ♞c8 White can avoid any counterplay with 32 ♞a1! and Black is left with his static weaknesses: poor pawns and an even poorer bishop.

32 ♖f2 ♞e4 33 ♞a8+ ♖h7 34 ♞f8 ♞e7

34...♙g8? fails elegantly to 35 ♞xg8! ♞f4+ 36 ♖e3! (not 36 ♖g3 ♞xd4 with 37...♞d3+ to come) 36...♞c4+ 37 ♖d3 ♖xg8 38 ♙xd5+.

35 ♙c2 ♙e8 36 ♙d3 b4 37 g3 b3 38 h4

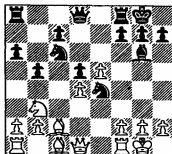
Black is in zugzwang as there are no 'pass' moves.

38...♙c6 39 ♞c8 ♙b7 40 ♞c3 ♞d7 41 ♞xb3 ♞c7 42 ♞c3 1-0

Polgar points out the reason for her opponent's early resignation: on 42...♞xc3 43 bxc3 ♙c6 44 ♖f3 ♖g8 White continues 45 ♙a6, threatening ♙c8-e6-g8-h7-g6 and the h5-pawn falls. Black can only defend the h-pawn by putting his king on h6, which naturally allows White to create a passed d-pawn and win easily.

Game 19
Karpov-Yusupov
USSR Ch., Moscow 1983

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5
♙e6 9 c3 ♙c5 10 ♖bd2 0-0 11 ♙c2 ♙f5
12 ♖b3 ♙g6 13 ♖fd4 ♙xd4 14 cxd4



After this move Black must react quickly before White completes his development and plays on the c-file. The awkward move f2-f3 is also in the air.

14...a5

Played in order to meet 15 f3 by 15...a4!

15 ♙e3

Alternatively:

a) 15 f4 is best met by 15...f5!

b) 15 ♙d3 soon simplified out to equality in Ljubojevic-Tal, Niksic 1983, after 15...a4 16 ♙xb5 axb3 17 ♙xc6 ♞a6 18 f3 ♞xc6 19 fxe4 bxa2 20 ♞xa2 ♙xe4 21 b3.

c) 15 a4 leads to nothing after 15...♖b4 16 ♙b1 bxa4 17 ♞xa4 ♖xf2! Hence White's best is the most natural developing move available.

15...a4 16 ♖d2

The alternative retreat 16 ♖c1 is covered in Games 20 and 21.

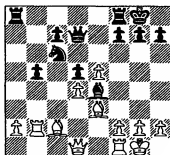
16...a3

The continuation 16...♖e7?! 17 f3 ♖xd2 18 ♞xd2 c6 19 ♞ac1 of Ernst-Conquest, Gausdal 1991, allows White a comfortable edge. Instead 16...f6? should be countered by 17 f4! fxe5 18 dxe5 ♖xd2 19 ♙xd2 ♞d7 20 ♙xg6 hxg6 21 ♞c2 ♞e6 22 ♞ac1, as in Prandstetter-Haba, Prague 1990, when the pressure on the c-file leaves White with the initiative.

17 ♖xe4 axb2 18 ♞b1 ♙xe4

18...dxe4? 19 ♞xb2 ♞d5, as in Comet-Ferret, World Computer Championship, Jakarta 1996, might be worth a try.

19 ♞xb2 ♞d7



This position was very fashionable in the early eighties. The pressure on the b- and c-files is enough for White to keep a slight but persistent edge as our main game illustrates.

20 ♟d3!

Better than 20 ♟e4 dxe4 21 ♞xb5 ♞xd4 22 ♟c5 ♞fd8 which was only equal in A.Ivanov-Yusupov, USSR Championship, Frunze 1979.

20...♟xd3

Not 20...b4? 21 ♟b5 ♞fb8 22 ♞xb4, which was very difficult for Black in Ernst-Ater, Berlin 1988, as he cannot recapture his pawn due to 22...♞xa2?? 23 ♟xc6 ♞xc6 24 ♞xb8+.

21 ♞xd3 ♞fb8 22 ♞fb1

More direct is 22 f4 aiming for f4-f5 and e5-e6.

22...b4 23 h3

It's true that 23 a3 bxa3 24 ♞xb8+ ♞xb8 25 ♞xb8+ ♞xb8 26 ♞xa3, as in Hübner-Korchnoi, Chicago 1982, was still better for White, but the extra simplification makes the game rather drawish.

23...h6 24 ♟c1 ♞b6 25 ♞b1 ♞ab8

A later game Popovic-Timman, Sarajevo 1984, continued 25...♞a7 26 ♟c5 ♞a5 (too optimistic) 27 ♞xb4 ♞c4 28 ♞b3 ♞ab7 29 ♟h2 c6 30 ♞a5! and Black was in trouble and soon lost.

26 ♟c5 ♞d8 27 ♞cc2 ♞c6

Black can only wait and see as 27...♞e6 is strongly met by 28 f4 etc.

28 ♞c1 ♞b7 29 ♟c5 ♞e7 30 ♟h2

White can continue to probe on the queenside and prepare g2-g4, f4-f4 and a steady advance on the other wing; meanwhile Black remains passive. Yusupov decides to play actively, but as so often happens, this precipitates the end.

30...♞f5 31 ♞bc2 ♞g6 32 ♞xc7 ♞xc7 33 ♞xc7 ♞b5 34 g4 ♞h4 35 ♞c8+ ♟h7 36 ♞d1

Stopping the black queen from coming to d3, e2 or f1.

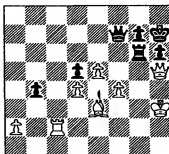
36...♞a6 37 ♟c2

Karpov holds everything and prepares to play ♟e3-f4-g3.

37...f5 38 ♟g3!

A neat way of winning a piece.

38...fxg4 39 ♟xh4 gxh3 40 f4! ♞e6 41 ♞h5 ♞e7+ 42 ♟xh3 ♞f7



A tricky move to meet but Karpov has seen everything.

43 ♞h2!

Indirectly defending the queen and so the threat of ...♞g3+ is met.

43...♞d7+ 44 f5 1-0

Karpov makes everything look so smooth! It seems that Black doesn't quite equalise against 16 ♞d2, although most players with the white pieces wouldn't be able to make anything out of such a small edge.

Game 20
Chekhov-Gorelov
Beskidy 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♞f3 ♞c6 3 ♟b5 a6 4 ♟a4 ♞f6 5 0-0 ♞xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♟b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♟e6 9 c3 ♟c5 10 ♞bd2 0-0 11 ♟c2 ♟f5 12 ♞b3 ♟g6 13 ♞fd4 ♟xd4 14 cxd4 a5 15 ♟e3 a4 16 ♞c1 a3

In order to give Black access to the c3-square.

17 b3

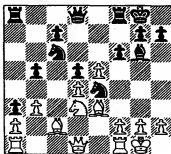
The alternative 17 bxa3 doesn't cause too many problems: 17...♞xa3 18 ♞d3 (after 18 ♟b3 ♞c3 19 ♞d2 b4 20 ♞d3 ♟xd3 21 ♞xd3 ♞a8!, as in Nunn-Marin, Thessaloniki Olympiad 1988, the knight on c3 gave Black an excellent game) 18...♞c3 19 ♞d2 ♞a5 20 ♟b3 ♞xa2 21 ♞c5 ♞xb3 22 ♞xb3, as in

Hickl-Van der Sterren, Munich 1990, and now 22...♞xb3 (Korchnoi) was equal.

17...f6!

The older 17...♣b4?! 18 ♖b1 c5 19 dxc5 ♣c6 20 ♣e2, as in Tseshkovsky-Geller, USSR Championship 1980/81, is given by all the books as clearly better for White, but here Black should have played 20...♣e5 which is not so clear.

18 ♣d3



18 exf6 is covered in Game 21, while 18 f3 is met by a promising piece sacrifice 18...fxe5! 19 fxex4 ♞xf1+ 20 ♣xf1? exd4 21 ♖xd4 dxe4 22 ♖e3?? (better is 22 ♖c3 ♞f8+ 23 ♖e1 ♞d8, although Black has excellent compensation for the piece) 22...♞f6+ 23 ♖g1 ♞d8 24 ♞g4 ♞c3 0-1 Solomon-Van der Sterren, Sydney 1991.

White can improve with 20 ♞xf1 exd4 21 ♞xb5 (or 21 ♖f4 dxe4 22 ♞xb5 ♞f6 and the two central passed pawns and active pieces are fully worth the piece - Flear) 21...♣a7 22 ♞xd5+ ♞xd5 23 exd5 dxe3 24 ♖xg6 hxg6 25 ♣d3 ♣b5 with equal chances according to Nunn.

18...b4!?

Unconvincing is 18...♞e8?! as 19 f3 fxe5 20 ♣xe5 ♣xe5 21 fxe4 ♣d7 22 e5 left White with an edge in Aseev-Haba, Germany 1994, when he was able to win by using both c- and f-files for his rooks.

Therefore Black's best chance may be 18...fxe5. The point is that 19 ♣xe5 ♣xe5 20

♖xe4 dxe4! (20...♖xe4 21 dxe5 wasn't so easy for Black, who has the worse pawn structure, in Aseev-Korneev, Krumbach 1991) seems to equalise as White cannot use his kingside majority. After 21 dxe5 ♞xd1 22 ♞fxd1 ♞fd8 23 h3 ♖f7 24 ♞xd8+ ♞xd8 25 ♞c1 ♞c8 26 ♖c5 ♖d5 27 ♣f1 c6 Black had a blockade in Ivanchuk-Timman, Riga 1985.

19 ♞e1!

A useful move, hitting b4 and getting ready to undermine the knight if it ventures to c3.

19...fxe5

If 19...♞b8 20 f3 ♣c3 21 ♣xb4 ♣xb4 22 ♖xg6 ♣bxa2 23 ♖c2 fxe5 24 ♞f2! (Chekhov) Black's knights are horribly tangled. He also gives 19...♞e7 20 f4 fxe5 21 dxe5 d4 22 ♖d2 as an edge for White, but the continuation 22...♣c3 23 g4 ♖f7 24 f5 ♖d5 is complicated and Black is not without counterplay.

Instead 19...♣c3? is refuted by 20 ♣xb4! ♣xb4 21 ♖xg6 ♣bxa2 22 ♖b1! ♣xb1 23 ♞xa2 and White wins a piece.

20 ♣xe5 ♣xe5 21 dxe5 ♞e7

21...d4? fails dismally to 22 ♞d1 c5 23 ♖xd4, as Chekhov points out.

22 f3 ♣c3 23 ♖xg6 hxg6 24 ♖d4 ♞f5 25 ♞e3 e5?!

Chekhov instead suggests 25...♞e8! with the plausible continuation 26 ♞fe1 ♣b5 27 ♖c5 ♞e6 (27...♞xe5?? 28 ♞f2) 28 f4 g5 29 ♞d3 c6 30 fxg5 ♞xg5 (30...♞xe5? 31 ♖xb4!) 31 ♖xb4 ♞xe5 32 ♞xe5 ♞xe5 33 ♞e1 ♞d4+ 34 ♞xd4 ♞xe1+ 35 ♖xe1 ♣xd4 36 ♖d2! (36 ♣f2? ♣xb3! 37 axb3 d4) 36...♣f7 37 ♣f2 and the bishop is better than the knight but a draw is on the cards.

26 ♖xc5 ♞xe5 27 ♖xe7 ♞xe3 28 ♖xb4 d4 29 ♞f2!

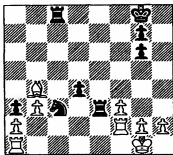
Black doesn't have enough compensation for the pawn.

29...♞c8

see following diagram

30 ♖xc3?!

After 30 ♖xa3! ♜e2+ 31 ♜f1 ♚c2, Black, just as he does in the double-rook ending that follows, obtains too much counterplay, so 30 ♚d2! was more to the point.



30...♖xc3 31 ♚d2 ♚c2 32 ♚xd4 ♚b2 33 ♚g4 ♜f7 34 ♚f4+ ♜g8 35 ♚g4 ♜f7 36 ♚4 ♚cc2 37 ♚e1 ♚e2!

Not of course 37...♚xa2 38 ♚f4+ ♜g8 39 ♚e8+ ♜h7 40 ♚ff8 ♚xg2+ 41 ♜f1 g5 42 h5 and White wins.

38 ♚xe2

38 ♚c1 is naturally met by 38...♚ec2.

38...♚xe2 39 ♚a4 ♚xa2 40 ♜h2 ♚a1 41 ♜g3 a2 42 ♜f4 ♚b1 43 ♚a7+ ♜g8 44 ♚xa2 ♚xb3 45 ♜g5 ♜h7 46 ♚a5 ♚c3 ½-½

Game 21
Short-Timman
Yerevan Olympiad 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6
5 0-0 ♜xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♜bd2 0-0 11 ♖c2 ♖f5
12 ♜b3 ♖g6 13 ♜fd4 ♖xd4 14 cxd4 a5
15 ♖e3 a4 16 ♜c1 a3 17 b3 f6 18 exf6

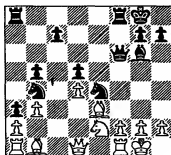
18 ♜d3 was covered in the previous game.

18...♜xf6 19 ♜e2 ♜b4!

Less logical seems 19...♜e7 20 ♚c1 ♜b4 21 ♖b1 ♚ae8, as in Speelman-Timman, London (4th matchgame) 1989, since White

has developed his rook before retreating the bishop to b1, unlike the text continuation.

20 ♖b1



Not surprisingly, given that he has fully activated his forces, Black has several routes to full equality. White is not really organised enough (as yet) to exploit the weaknesses in Black's pawn structure.

20...♜e7

Interesting is 20...c5, an untried suggestion, which was analysed by Nunn to a draw following 21 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 22 dxc5 ♜c2 23 ♚c1 ♖xg2 24 ♜xg2 ♜f3+ 25 ♜g1 ♜xe3 26 fxex3 ♜xe3+.

Best could be 20...♚ae8! 21 ♜g3 (after 21 ♜c1 c5! Black has a very active game) 21...♚e6, as in Liberzon-Stean, Beersheva 1982, when Black has equal chances according to theory. Note how active his pieces are and how easy it is for White to go astray. The game continued 22 ♖xe4! (White should play 22 ♜c1 ♜xg3 23 hxg3 ♖xb1 24 ♜xb1 ♚c6 25 ♚c1 with equality according to Liberzon) 22...dxe4 23 ♜d2 ♜d3 and Black was already better.

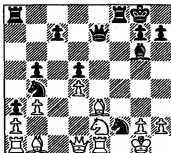
21 ♚e1

White threatens f2-f3. Another Karpov-Korchnoi encounter (6th matchgame, Merano 1981) continued 21 ♜e1 ♚fe8 22 ♜f4 ♖f7, when 23 ♜d3 ♜xd3 24 ♖xd3 is given by all the books as a shade better for White. Then 24...b4! 25 ♚c1 ♜c3 is critical as the knight finds an excellent outpost, so the

game is not clear at all (Flear).

21...♖xf2!

Otherwise after 22 f3 Black would be denied the central outpost and he will be pushed back. In this variation Black has to keep going forward or end up with a 'Swiss cheese' queenside in the ending.



22 ♗xf2 ♗xb1 23 ♜xb1 ♜xf2 24 ♖xf2

♜f8+ 25 ♖f4

Forced, as after 25 ♖g1 ♜e3+ 26 ♖h1, the move 26...♖d3 gives Black a ferocious attack.

25...♜xf4+ 26 ♖g1 ♜e4!

Timman rejected 26...♜f6 because of 27 ♜e8+ ♖f7 28 ♜c8 when the c-pawn and Black's king are exposed.

27 ♜d2 ♖d3! 28 ♜f1!?

Trying for more than the draw that results from 28 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 29 ♜d1 ♜xd4+ 30 ♖h1 ♖f2+.

28...♜xd4 29 ♜f3 ♖f4

Unpinning cleverly as the rook cannot be taken in view of 30...♖e2+.

30 ♜f2 g5 31 ♜e3 ♜e4 32 ♜xe4 dxe4

Black has two pawns, which is sufficient compensation here as his knight cannot be denied an advanced outpost.

33 ♜e3 ♖d3 34 ♜f1 ♜e5 35 ♖h1 ♖g7 36 h4 g4 37 g3 h6 ½-½

Summary

White has tried various move orders and nuances to obtain something concrete against the solid 11...♟f5. The most convincing idea is 12 ♞b3 ♟g6 13 ♞fd4 ♟xd4 14 cxd4 a5 15 ♟e3 a4 16 ♞d2 of Game 19 where Black seems to be struggling to fully equalise.

Of the earlier deviations, 14 ♞xd4 (Game 18) looks like a dangerous surprise weapon but this may be true only under the guidance of Judit Polgar. White has several 13th alternatives but they don't give him anything special. At move 12, 12...♟g4 is best avoided but 12...♟xf2+ is playable, though less aggressive than in Chapter 2.

1 e4 e5 2 ♞f3 ♞c6 3 ♟b5 a6 4 ♟a4 ♞f6 5 0-0 ♞xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♟b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♟e6
9 c3 ♟c5 10 ♞bd2 0-0 11 ♟c2 ♟f5

12 ♞b3 ♟g6 (D)

12...♟xf2+ – Game 13

12...♟g4 – Game 14

13 ♞fd4

13 a4 – Game 15

13 ♟f4 – Game 16

13 ♞bd4 – Game 17

13...♟xd4 14 cxd4

14 ♞xd4 – Game 18

14...a5 15 ♟e3 a4 (D) 16 ♞c1

16 ♞d2 – Game 19

16...a3 17 b3 f6 18 exf6

18 ♞d3 – Game 20

18...♞xf6 (D) – Game 21



12...♟g6



15...a4



18...♞xf6

CHAPTER FOUR

9 c3 ♖c5: Tenth Move Alternatives



1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♖c5

Sometimes White prefers other moves to 10 ♗bd2 and these alternatives are covered in this chapter. The main advantage of keeping the knight temporarily on b1 is that the dark-squared bishop can be developed rapidly or the white queen can come to d3. Lines with an early ♗e2 can transpose from 9 ♗e2 (see Chapter 9) and those with an early ♗e3 to the lines featuring 9 ♗e3 (see Chapter 11).

To provide a brief overview of the content of this chapter: 10 ♗f4 (Game 22) is tricky but doesn't offer a theoretical edge; 10 a4 (notes to Game 22) should be met by 10...b4; Game 23 gives a good model of how to handle 10 ♗e2 followed by 11 ♗e3; and 10 ♗d3 followed by 11 ♗bd2 (Games 24-26) or 11 ♗e3 (Game 27) are complicated: Black is okay but some memorisation of long lines is necessary.

The fact that the theoretically strongest move is 10 ♗bd2 should not lull the Open player into over-confidence if he faces one of these variations. Early deviations are sometimes deadly because of their surprise value and readers intending to play 9...♗c5 should not skip over this chapter.

Game 22 Gofshtein-Mikhalevski Beersheva 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3...♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♗f4

A rare move that provokes Black into tricky complications, where he stands well if he knows what to do. White reinforces the e5-pawn and prepares quick development and the undermining of the knight on e4 by ♗fd4 and f2-f3 or ♗bd2 and ♗xe4.

Black should meet 10 a4 (a typical idea seen in many variations of the Open; White immediately creates threats against b5 and d5) with 10...b4! (10...♗b8?! is inadvisable as 11 axb5 axb5 12 ♗bd2 0-0 13 ♗c2 gives White a better version of lines arising in several other chapters: White has already freed his queen's rook for action on the a-file and thus has gained time on some main lines) 11 ♗d4 ♗xe5 12 cxb4 ♗xd4 (12...♗xb4!? 13 f3 leads to complications which Korchnoi judges as unclear after 13...♗c5! 14 ♗e3 ♖f6 15 ♗c1 ♗d6) 13 ♗xd4 ♗f6 14 ♗e3 ♗c6 15 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 16 ♗c1 ♗xb4 17 ♗xc7 0-0 with equal chances in Wedberg-Castro, Manila Olympiad 1992.

Compare this to 10 ♖bd2 0-0 11 a4 when for the same reason 11...b4 is Black's most logical course. The game Kupreichik-Mikhailchishin, Lvov 1988, continued 12 ♖c2 bxc3! (instead of this 12...♖f5! is better) 13 ♗xe4 dxe4 14 ♖xe4 ♖xd1 15 ♖xd1 ♗fd8 16 ♗e1 cxb2 17 ♖xb2 ♗ab8 18 ♖a3 ♖xa3 19 ♖xa3 ♖d5 20 g3 ♗e7 21 ♖c3 c6 22 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 23 ♖c4, which turned out to be a little better for White thanks to his superior pawn structure.

Despite this instructive counter-example, I believe that Black should meet a2-a4 on moves 9, 10 or 11 with ...b4.

10...g5!

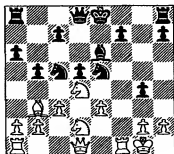
Black does best to allow himself to be provoked! The text forces the win of the e-pawn at the risk of loosening the kingside. However, White thus obtains some tactical play against a less than fully secure black king.

11 ♖e3

Not 11 ♖g3? h5! and White is already in trouble.

11...♖xe3 12 fxe3 g4 13 ♖d4 ♗xe5 14 ♖d2 ♖c5!?

Inferior is 14...♖xd2! 15 ♖xd2, as in Murey-Flear, Brussels 1992, when after 15...♖g5 16 a4 ♖c4 White can cause problems by playing 17 ♖f2! with threats on the a- and f-files.



15 e4!?

White wants to blast open the centre while

the black king is exposed.

Most games have continued 15 ♖e1, but the correct defence has been worked out: 15...♖d6! (15...0-0 16 ♖g3 ♖g5, as in Metger-Tarrasch, Frankfurt 1887, allows Perenyi's 17 ♖xd5!, when 17...♖xd5 18 ♗f5 leaves the black position compromised without even any material compensation) 16 e4 (Mikhailchishin considers 16 ♖h4 ♖g6 17 ♖f6 ♖e7 18 e4 ♖xf6 19 ♖xf6 0-0-0 to be unclear) 16...0-0-0 17 exd5 ♖xd5 18 ♖f5 ♖e6 19 ♖d4! (not 19 ♖e3? ♖xb3 20 axb3 ♖b7 Perenyi-Mikhailchishin, Linz 1988, when Black has consolidated the extra pawn) 19...♖d6 with a repetition. For those looking for winning prospects Korchnoi suggests 19...♖e8 instead of 19...♖d6.

15...♖xb3 16 axb3 0-0 17 ♖e1

White could have considered 17 ♖e2 with the point that 17...♖g6 is then met by 18 ♖xe6 fxe6 19 ♖xg4, so Black would do better in that case to play 17...♖d6.

17...♖g6! 18 ♖e3

Mikhalevski points out that Black has the slightly better ending after the exchanges that follow 18 exd5 ♖xd5 19 ♖e3! ♗e8 20 ♖h6 ♖h4 21 ♖f5 ♖xh6 22 ♖xh6+ ♖g7 23 ♖xg4 ♗e2 24 ♗f2 ♖xf2 25 ♖xf2 ♖b7.

18...♗e8! 19 ♗ae1 c5!

Forcing White to make a decision about this knight.

20 ♖xe6

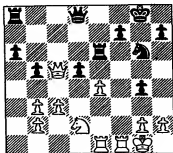
Mikhalevski shows the consequences of 20 ♖f5 with some deep analysis: 20...♖xf5 21 ♖xf5 d4 22 ♖h6! ♗e5! 23 ♗ef1! ♖f8 24 ♖h5 ♗ae8 25 ♖xg4 ♖h6! and here he claims an edge for Black. However, I think that White is okay after the further 26 ♖xe5 ♗e5 27 ♖d7 ♗e7 28 ♖c8+ ♖g7 29 ♗f2.

20...♗e6 21 ♖xc5

see following diagram

21...d4!

Sacrificing material to wrest the initiative. The opening duel has been won by Black due to energetic play on his part.



22 ♖f5

Taking on d4 is fraught with danger: 22 ♖xd4? fails to 22...♗d6 23 ♖f2 ♗xd2 24 ♖xf7+ ♔h8 and Black wins, while after 22 cxd4?! ♗c8 23 ♖b4 a5! 24 ♖xb5 ♗xd4+ 25 ♗f2 ♗c2 White will be tied up to the defence of the second rank.

22...♗a7! 23 ♖xg4!

Obtaining f3 for the knight at the cost of the queenside.

23...dxc3 24 ♔f3 cxb2 25 h4

Following 25 ♗f2 (25 ♖h5 is not dangerous after 25...f6) 25...♖f6 26 ♔g5 ♖c3 27 ♗ef1 ♗ee7 28 ♖h5, the cool 28...♖g7! holds everything together, for instance 29 ♗xb2? loses to 29...h6.

25...♔h8 26 ♗d1?!

More consistent was 26 h5 ♔e5 27 ♔xe5 ♗d4+ 28 ♔h1 ♖xe5 29 ♗d1 ♗e8, but Black has held the extra pawn and is in control.

26...♗d7! 27 ♔g5 ♗xd1 28 ♗xd1 ♖b6+ 29 ♔h1 ♗e7 30 ♗f1 ♖c6! 31 ♗d1 f6 32 ♗d4 ♔g8 33 h5 ♖c1 34 ♗d3 ♗d7! 35 ♖xd7 ♖xf1+ 36 ♔h2 ♖f4+ 37 g3 ♖xg5 38 hxg6 hxg6 39 ♗d3

A chase of the king fails, as Milkhalevski points out: 39 ♗d8+ ♔g7 40 ♖e7+ ♔h6 41 ♖f8+ ♔h5 42 ♖h8+ ♖h6! 43 ♖xf6 ♔g4+ 44 ♔g2 ♗d2+ etc.

39...♔g7 40 ♔g2 ♔h6 41 ♗d8 ♖g4! 42 ♗d2+

42 ♖xf6 is hopeless after first 42...♖xe4+ and only then queening the pawn.

42...♔h5! 43 ♗d5+

On 43 ♖xb2 then 43...♖xe4+ 44 ♔h2 ♔g4 wins comfortably, for instance 45 ♖xf6 ♖e2+ 46 ♔h1 ♖e1+ 47 ♔g2 ♖xg3+.

43...f5 44 ♗d8 ♖xe4+ 45 ♔h2

Better is 45 ♔f2 but after 45...g5! White can resign anyway.

45...b1 ♖0-1

Game 23

Kamsky-Anand

Las Palmas (6th matchgame) 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♔f3 ♔c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♔f6 5 0-0 ♔xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 9 c3

In fact, 9 ♗e3 ♗c5 (I recommend 9...♗e7 – see Chapter 11) 10 ♖e2 ♖e7 11 c3 0-0 was the actual move order of this game.

9...♗c5 10 ♖e2 0-0 11 ♗e3

White embarks upon a plan to exchange Black's dark-squared bishop and to bring his rook to the d-file or to press against c5. With accurate play Black has little to worry him but the position can become simplified too quickly and a little dull.

11...♖e7

The simplification 11...♗xe3 12 ♖xe3 allows White to obtain control of c5 too easily and is what he is playing for! This theme is developed in Game 27 (see 10 ♗d3 ♗xe3 and 10...♗d7).

Instead 11...f6 can be met by the active pawn sacrifice 12 ♗d1 ♗xe3 13 ♖xe3 fxg5 14 ♔bd2, when Korchnoi slightly prefers White. Then the further 14...♔xd2 15 ♗xd2 ♗xf3! 16 gxg3 ♔e7 might be worth investigation.

12 ♗d1

Or 12 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 13 ♔bd2 ♗g4 14 ♔xe4 dxe4 15 ♖xe4 ♗xf3 16 ♗xf3 ♔xe5 17 ♖e4 ♗ad8 18 ♗ad1 ♔c4 19 ♗xc4 bxc4 20 ♗fe1 g6 and the game is drawish, as in Matanovic-Geller, Yugoslavia-USSR 1958.

12...♗ad8 13 ♗xc5

An earlier game Kuijpers-Ekström, Bern

1988, continued 13 ♖bd2 ♖xc3 14 ♖xc3 ♖xd2 15 ♖xd2 ♖a5 16 ♖ad1 ♖xb3 17 axb3 c5 and was pretty solid for Black.

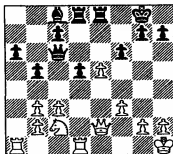
13... ♖xc5 14 ♖d4 ♖b6!

An excellent move, freeing c5 for the knight. Always be ready for f2-f3 in the Open!

15 f3 ♖c5 16 ♖h1

After 16 ♖xc6 Anand gives '16... ♖xc6 17 ♖d2 equal' but 16... ♖xb3+ is much stronger, e.g. 17 ♖h1 ♖xa1 18 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 19 ♖a3 b4 20 cxb4 ♖xb4 21 ♖xa1 ♖b8 and Black is much better (Fear).

16... ♖fe8 17 ♖a3 ♖c8 18 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 19 ♖c2 ♖xb3 20 axb3 f6



Black has a clear advantage but Kamsky keeps his cool and sacrifices the pawn immediately. He has excellent drawing chances as Black's queenside majority is well blocked by the knight.

21 e6! ♖xe6 22 ♖f2 ♖d6 23 b4 ♖de8 24 ♖d2 ♖e7 25 ♖g1 ♖e5 26 ♖d4 ♖d6 27 ♖b3 ♖e3 28 ♖ad1 c6 29 ♖g3 ♖e7 30 ♖f2 ♖e5 31 ♖d4 ♖c7 32 ♖b3 ♖e3 33 ♖d4 ♖3e5 34 ♖b3 h6 35 ♖f1 ♖e336 ♖d4 ♖3e5 37 ♖b3 ♖e3 38 ♖d4 ½-½

Game 24
Khalifman-Kaidanov
Kuibyshev 1986

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5

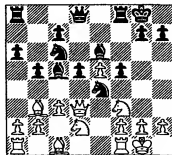
♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♖d3 0-0 11 ♖bd2

Andrei Sokolov's pet-line. White undermines the knight and intends to use his queen actively. The alternative is 11 ♖e3 (see Game 27).

11... f5

Too passive is 11... ♖xd2?! 12 ♖xd2 ♖e7 (or 12... ♖e7 13 ♖c2 g6 14 ♖h6) 13 ♖d4 ♖d7 14 ♖c2 g6 15 b4 ♖xd4 16 ♖xd4 ♖c6 17 ♖h4 ♖xe5 18 ♖h6 f6 19 ♖xf8 ♖xf8 20 a4 and Black had very little for the exchange in Bonch Osmolovsky-Chekhover, USSR 1956. This is a good illustration of Black's problems on the kingside dark squares when the bishop on c5 has no influence.

However, 11... ♖xf2 12 ♖xf2 ♖xf2+ 13 ♖xf2 f6 14 exf6 ♖xf6 is worth a try, as 15 ♖xd5?! ♖c5 16 ♖xe6+ ♖xe6 looks risky for White.



12 exf6 ♖xf6 13 ♖g5

Nowadays 13 a4 is considered more precise, leading after 13... ♖b8 14 axb5 axb5 to similar play as the main game except that White has an extra trump in the form of his control of the a-file - see Games 25 and 26.

13... ♖e5!

More active than 13... ♖f7?! 14 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 15 ♖f3 when White has threats against d5 and controls the e5-square.

14 ♖g3 ♖d6 15 ♖c2

Now that Black has covered the d5-pawn the bishop switches to a more productive diagonal. Black is better after 15 ♖d3

Qxf3+ 16 Qxf3 Wxg3 17 hgx3 Qe4, and much better after 15 Re1? Qf4 16 Qde4 dxe4 17 Qxe6+ Qh8 18 Qe3 Qxf2! 19 Wh4 h6 20 Qxe4 Qxe4 21 Wxe4 Qae8!, as in Schelfhout-Euwe, Amsterdam 1942. White is also ill-advised to take the bishop pair immediately with 15 Qxe6 because he will then struggle to complete his development. This option will later become annoying, so now Black does best to retreat his bishop.

15... Qd7 16 Qb3 Qb6 17 Qd4 Qae8 18 Qf4

White develops and builds up his threats. Black cannot leave this pin unchallenged.

18... Qh5!

A pawn sacrifice which leads to the white bishop becoming locked out of play on h7.

19 Qxe5 Qxe5 20 Qxh7+ Qh8 21 Wh4 g6

The alternative 21... Wh6 is inferior as is known from an analogous position (see Game 25; note to Black's 23rd move).

22 f4 Qxd4+

Black could also consider 22... Qxg5 23 Wxg5 (23 fxg5? Qxh7 24 Qxf8 Wxf8 25 Qf1 Wg7 26 Qh1 Qg8 27 b4 is given by Kaidanov as unclear) 23... Qxh7 24 f5 Qxf5 25 Qxf5 Qxf5 26 g4 Qc5 which is analogous to Game 26.

23 cxd4 Qef5

I once played 23... Qxg5? here (the result of only half remembering the theory – a little knowledge is a dangerous thing...!), but after 24 Wxg5 Qxh7 25 f5 Qxf5 26 Qxf5 Qxf5 27 g4 Qb4 28 Qd1 Qc2 29 Qd2 White was winning in Howell-Flear, Oakham 1994.

24 g3 Qg7 25 Qae1

see following diagram

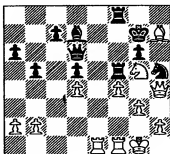
25... Qxf4!

Black goes for liberation.

26 gxf4 Qxf4 27 Qxf4 Qxf4 28 Qe7+ Qf8 29 Qe8+

A remarkable tactical reply. Instead 29 Wh6+ Qxe7 30 Wg7+ Qd8 31 Qf7+ Qxf7 32 Wxf7 Qf5 leaves Black with a winning

position. He is only one pawn up, but the white bishop is locked out of play.



29... Qxe8

Not 29... Qxe8?? 30 Wxf4+ Wxf4 31 Qe6+ Qe7 32 Qxf4 and White comes out a piece ahead.

30 Qxg6+ Qe7

A draw is also on the cards after the alternative line 30... Wxg6 31 Wxf4 Qb1+ 32 Wf1.

31 Wh7+ Qf6

31... Qd8 32 Qf7+ Qxf7 33 Wxf7 gives White nothing to fear.

32 Wh6! Qg4+ 33 Qh1 Wf4

Not 33... Qxg5? 34 Qd3+ Qf7 35 Wxg5 and White's h-pawn gives him the better chances.

34 Qh5+ Qe7 35 Wg7+ Qd6 36 Wg6+ Qe7 37 Wg7+ Qd6 38 Wg6+ ½-½

A great fighting draw.

The next two games are similar except that with the a-file open White has slightly more options.

Game 25

A. Sokolov-Timman

Reykjavik 1988

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qb5 a6 4 Qa4 Qf6
5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Qb3 d5 8 dxe5
Qe6 9 c3 Qc5 10 Qd3 0-0 11 Qbd2 f5
12 exf6 Qxf6 13 a4 Qb8

In my opinion 13... Qf7 is rather passive.

The game Andrei Sokolov-Yusupov, Tilburg 1987, continued as follows: 14 ♖g5 ♖e5 15 ♖g3 ♖d6 16 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 17 ♖f3 ♖xg3 18 hxg3 c6 19 ♖d4 ♖xd4 20 cxd4, when the two bishops offered White the better chances.

14 axb5 axb5 15 ♖g5 ♖e5

15...♖d6! is an excellent novelty that was introduced a few years ago by Skembris. Then 16 ♖c2 g6 17 ♖xe6 ♖g4 18 ♖g3 ♖xe6 19 ♖f3 ♖b8 20 ♖d2 ♖d6 was agreed drawn in A.Sokolov-Skembris, Bar 1997, but Black is perhaps already better as his pieces are so well placed.

16 ♖g3 ♖d6 17 ♖c2 ♖d7 18 ♖b3 ♖b6 19 ♖f4

Sokolov's latest try is 19 ♖d4 - see the next game.

19...♖b8 20 ♖d4 ♖h5 21 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 22 ♖xh7+ ♖h8 23 ♖h4 g6!

After 23...♖h6 Sokolov has shown how to obtain the advantage: 24 ♖df3 ♖e8 25 ♖fe1 ♖xe1+ 26 ♖xe1 ♖f6 (26...♖f4 27 g4 g6 28 h3 ♖c5 29 b4 ♖d6 30 ♖e5 Sokolov-Kobese, Groningen 1997, was even worse; Black is lost as he cannot defend all the weak squares around his king) 27 ♖c2 ♖g8, as in A.Sokolov-Timman, Belfort 1988, when 28 ♖xh6 gxh6 29 ♖e6 was best with a clear extra pawn for White (Sokolov).

24 f4

I was once faced with 24 g4! (a new idea) but I managed to find a way out: 24...♖xg5! 25 ♖xg5 ♖f4! 26 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 (Black abandons the exchange but the bishop is trapped) 27 ♖xg6 ♖xg6 (if 27...♖xg4 then 28 f3! ♖h3 29 ♖c2 grovels on but Black is still better) 28 f3 ♖h4 29 h3 ♖xf3 30 ♖h2 ♖xf1 31 ♖xf1 ♖g7 32 b4 c5 33 bxc5 ♖xc5 34 ♖g3 ½-½ Solozhenkin-Flear, Chanac open 1995.

24...♖xg5

In a recent game I borrowed 24...♖ef5! from an analogous position (see Game 24, after Black's 22nd or 23rd move). After 25 ♖xg6 a draw was agreed in Sax-Flear, Ano

Liosia 1999. This seemingly premature result is justified after 25...♖xg6 26 g4 ♖xf4 27 gxh5 ♖xd4+ 28 cxd4 ♖xf1+ 29 ♖xf1 ♖xf1+ 30 ♖f1 ♖d3+ with a perpetual check. More ambitious was 27...♖xh4!? 28 ♖xf8+ ♖g8 29 ♖xg8+ ♖xg8, but the ending seems okay for White after 30 ♖a8+ ♖g7 31 ♖d8.

25 ♖xg5 ♖xh7 26 ♖ae1?

A mistake. Timman's analysis shows that the game is equal after 26 f5! ♖xf5 27 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 28 g4 ♖e5 29 gxf5 ♖xd4+ 30 cxd4 ♖xd4+ 31 ♖h1 ♖e4+.

26...♖g7

Black consolidates and White's tactical play is limited. The two pieces will beat the rook in the long run.

27 ♖h1 ♖xd4 28 cxd4 ♖f5 29 ♖e7 ♖g8 30 ♖h4 ♖e4 31 h3 ♖d8!

Preparing ...♖f7. White has to shed a pawn to stay on the board.

32 f5 ♖xf5 33 ♖c1 ♖e4 34 ♖g1

34 ♖xc7 is not the sort of move Timman would allow without having something prepared. In fact, after 34...♖f1+ 35 ♖h2 ♖d6+ Black comes out a clear piece up, e.g. 36 ♖g3 ♖xg3+ 37 ♖xg3 ♖f5+ 38 ♖h2 ♖xe7.

34...♖f7! 35 ♖xe4 g5!

The point. Black now has a whole piece more.

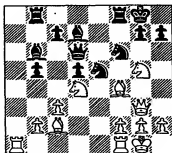
36 ♖g4 dxe4 37 ♖xe4 ♖f4 38 ♖e5 ♖xd4+ 39 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 40 ♖xc7 ♖b4 41 ♖f2 ♖xb2+ 42 ♖f3 ♖b4 43 ♖b7 ♖h7 44 g4 ♖g6 45 ♖b6+ ♖f7 46 ♖h6 ♖e8 47 ♖e3 ♖f6 48 ♖h8 ♖g7 0-1

Game 26

A. Sokolov-Sulskis

Geneva 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♖d3 0-0 11 ♖bd2 f5 12 exf6 ♖xf6 13 a4 ♖b8 14 axb5 axb5 15 ♖g5 ♖e5 16 ♖g3 ♖d6 17 ♖c2 ♖d7 18 ♖b3 ♖b6 19 ♖d4



19...h6

19...♖e8 looks reasonable, when White may have nothing better than 20 ♔f4 transposing to Game 25. However, 19...c5? 20 ♔f4 ♖be8 is no good because of 21 ♚de6! (Sulskis).

20 ♔f4 ♔xd4!

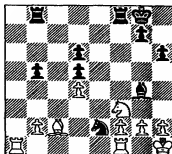
An important intermezzo. Instead 20...♚h5? loses a pawn after 21 ♔xe5 ♚xg3 22 ♔xd6 ♚xf1 23 ♔xf8 hxg5 24 ♔e7. 21 cxd4 ♚h5 22 ♔xe5?!

Sulskis prefers 22 dxe5 ♚xg3 23 exd6 ♚e2+ 24 ♔h1 ♚xf4 25 dxc7 ♖b7 26 ♚f3 ♖xc7 27 ♔b3 with chances for both sides after 27...♔f5.

22...♚xg3 23 ♔xd6 ♚e2+!

Now that this check is available, Black takes the initiative.

24 ♔h1 cxd6 25 ♚f3 ♔g4



White had probably overlooked the threat

of 26...♖xf3! 27 gxf3 ♔xf3 mate.

26 ♖a3

The line 26 ♔b3 ♖xf3 27 ♔xd5+ ♖f7 28 ♖a7 ♔h5 29 ♖d7 gives Black somewhat the better chances as he will eventually have two pieces for rook and pawn.

26...♔xf3 27 gxf3 ♚xd4 28 ♔b1

After 28 ♔b3 ♚xb3 29 ♖xb3 ♖fc8 30 ♖d1 ♖c2 31 ♖xd5 ♖e8 32 ♔g2 ♖ec2 33 ♖bxb5 ♖xf2+ 34 ♔g3 White has good drawing chances as the ending of rook plus g- and h-pawns against rook and f-pawn shouldn't be winning.

28...♖xf3 29 ♖xf3 ♚xf3 30 ♔a2 ♔f8 31 ♔xd5 ♚e5 32 ♖c1

Black has a clear extra pawn but White's activity should be sufficient to hold the game.

32...b4 33 f4 ♚d3 34 ♖c7 ♖b5 35 ♖f7+ 35 ♔c4 is naturally met by 35...♖c5.

35...♔e8 36 ♔b3 ♖c5

36...♚c1 gets nowhere after 37 ♔e6.

37 ♔g2 g5 38 ♖f6 ♚xf4+ 39 ♔f3 ♚d3 40 ♖xd6 ♚xb2 41 ♔g4?!

41 ♔e4! leaves the knight looking rather offside. White should win back one pawn, for instance 41...♚c4 (or 41...h5 42 ♖b6) 42 ♖c6+ ♔d7 43 ♔d4 ♖c7 44 ♖xh6 and a draw is not far away.

41...♖c3 42 ♔a2 ♖a3

42...b3 43 ♔xb3 ♖xb3 44 ♖xh6 ♖b5 45 ♖g6 draws easily for White.

43 ♔b1 ♖a1 44 ♔g6+?

Sulskis suggests 44 ♔f5 ♚c4 45 ♖xh6 ♚e5+ 46 ♔h5!

44...♔e7 45 ♖b6 ♖h1 46 ♔h5?! ♚d3 47 ♔g3 ♖e1 48 ♖xh6 b3 49 ♔g6 ♖g1+ 50 ♔f3 ♚e5+ 51 ♔f2 ♚g4+!

A surprise but now Black has enough to win.

52 ♔xg1 ♚xh6 53 ♔g2 ♔f6 54 ♔d3 ♔e5 55 ♔f3 ♔d4 56 ♔b1 ♔c3 57 h3 ♔d2 58 ♔e4 ♔c1 59 ♔d3 b2 60 ♔e5 ♚f7+ 61 ♔d5

61 ♔f6 is too slow: 61...♚d6 62 ♔xg5 ♚b5 63 h4 ♚a3 64 h5 ♚c2 65 ♔xc2 ♔xc2 66 h6 b1♖ and wins.

61...♗d8 62 ♖h7 ♗b7 63 ♖d4 ♗e5 64 ♖c3 ♗c6 65 ♖f5 ♗e5 66 ♖h7 ♗f3 0-1

Black picks off the h-pawn.

Sokolov has made the plan of 10 ♖d3 and 11 ♗bd2 into a useful weapon. Black has a satisfactory game, but only if he can find his way through the complications.

Game 27

Kamsky-Anand

Las Palmas (4th matchgame) 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♗f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5 10 ♖d3 0-0 11 ♖e3



White hopes that the exchange of dark-squared bishops will reduce Black's tactical activity, making it easier for him to exploit the weaknesses in the black pawn structure.

11...f5

The most precise as 11...f6 can be met by 12 ♗bd2 ♗xd2 13 ♖xd2 ♖xe3 14 ♖xe3 ♗xe5 15 ♗xe5 fxe5 16 ♖xe5 ♖d7 17 a4! c6 18 axb5 axb5 19 ♖c2 ♖xa1 20 ♖xa1 ♖f5 21 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 22 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 23 ♖a6 ♖f6 24 ♖f1, when White managed to win the ending in Berelovich-Mikhalevski, Groningen 1993. Instead 11...♖d7 is passive: 12 ♗bd2 ♖xe3 13 ♖xe3 f5 (Korchnoi examines 13...♗xd2 14 ♖xd2 ♗a5 15 ♖c2 c5 16 ♖d3 g6 17 ♖e3 and White has an edge) 14 exf6 ♗xf6 15 ♖c5 ♖ae8 16 ♗d4 ♗e5 17 ♖c2, as in Prasad-Bhave, Calcutta 1992, when White's

queen is a nuisance.

The immediate 11...♖xe3 seems to fall in with White's plan: 12 ♖xe3 ♗e7 13 ♖d1 h6 14 ♗bd2 ♖f5 15 a4 c6 16 ♗d4 ♖g6 17 ♗xe4 ♖xe4, as in Short-Yusupov, Linares 1990, and now Yusupov prefers White after the simple 18 ♖c2.

12 exf6 ♖xf6 13 ♗bd2

Nobody ever plays 13 ♖xd5 any more as it is well met by 13...♖ad8 when 14 ♖xe6+ (14 ♖xc5?! is worse due to 14...♗xc5 15 ♖xe6+ ♖xe6 16 ♖e3 ♖xe3 17 fxe3 ♗d3 and Black wins back the pawn under favourable circumstances) 14...♖xe6 15 ♖e2 ♗xf2! 16 ♖xf2 ♖de8 17 ♖e1 ♖d6 18 ♖d2 ♖xf3+! gives Black enough play for a draw, e.g. 19 ♖xf3?! (19 gxf3 is simplest as Black has nothing better than 19...♖xh2+ 20 ♖f1 ♖h1+ drawing) 19...♗e5+ 20 ♖e2 ♖c6 is given as 'equal' by Korchnoi. After 21 ♖d1 (or 21 ♖xc5 ♗c4+ 22 ♖e3 ♖xg2+ 23 ♖d1 ♗xd2 24 ♗xd2 ♖xh2 and Black shouldn't be worse) 21...♗c4 22 ♖xc5 ♗xd2 23 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 24 ♖xd2 (24 ♗xd2?? ♖h5+) 24...♖c6 Black picks off the kingside and is probably better.

13...♖xe3

13...♗e5 is unanimously regarded by theory as inferior: 14 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 15 ♖d4 ♖xd4 16 cxd4 ♖d6 17 ♖a1, as in Tal-Langeweg, Wijk aan Zee 1960, when Black has some ugly squares and a bad bishop.

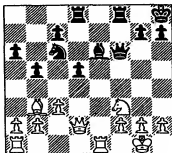
14 ♖xe3 ♗xd2 15 ♖xd2

15 ♗xd2, with the idea of tucking the queen into the c5-hole, was adequately met in a tussle between two correspondence legends: 15...♖ad8 16 ♖c5 ♖f7 17 ♖ad1 ♖d6 18 ♗d4 ♖xc5 19 ♗xc5 a5 20 a4 b4 with equal chances in Zagorovsky-Estrin, correspondence 1968-72. (Yes, that's what I meant to write. At least they had plenty of time to get it right!). Note that Black used his queenside pawns actively.

15...♖ad8 16 ♖fe1 ♖h8!

The alternative 16...♗a5 has also been played, but White can keep an eye on the

dark squares by 17 ♖e3 or 17 ♗d4.



The game move, getting off the a2-g8 diagonal, is the best plan.

17 ♖e3

After 17 ♖d4 Black keeps everything under control with 17...♗g8. Ftacnik points out that 17 ♖e3 ♗g4 18 ♖d4 ♖a5, preparing ...c7-c5, gives adequate counter-chances.

17...♗g8 18 ♖d1?

A slip which allows Black to seize the initiative. After the normal 18 ♖d4 ♖e5 chances are balanced.

18...d4! 19 ♖ee1

Not 19 ♖xd4? ♖xd4 20 cxd4 ♖xd4 21 ♗xd4?? as 21...♗xf2+ mates.

19...dxc3 20 ♗xc3 ♗xc3 21 bxc3 ♖a5?!

Impatient! The slower plan of 21...h6 22 h3 ♖a5 cuts out White's counterplay and leaves Black with the better pawn structure.

22 ♗xg8 ♗xg8 23 ♖g5! ♖c4 24 h4

After 24 ♖e6 ♖xd1 25 ♖xd1 ♖b2! Black stays afloat due White's weak back rank (26

♖d7?? ♖e8).

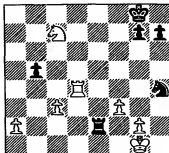
24...♖xd1 25 ♖xd1 ♖d6 26 ♖e6 ♖f7 27 f3

Black is not worried by 27 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 28 ♖xd6 ♖xc3 29 ♖xa6 b4 30 g3 b3, when the ending is drawn.

27...♖e7 28 ♖c5 ♖e2?!

Simpler was 28...♖e3!

29 ♖xa6 ♖f5 30 ♖xc7 ♖xh4 31 ♖d4



31...d5

A playable alternative was 31...♖g2!? Either way Black has to play actively to hold the draw.

32 ♖e4 ♖xa2 33 ♖xb5 ♖c2

Or 33...♖b2.

34 ♖h2 ♖b2 35 ♖d4?!

After 35 c4 h5 White retains some winning chances.

35...♖xd4 36 ♖xd4 ♖c2 37 ♖c4 ♖f7 38

f4 ♖d2! 39 ♖c6 ♖d3 40 g3 h5! 41 ♖h3

g6 42 ♖g2 ♖e3 43 ♖c8 ♖g7 44 c4 ♖c3

45 c5 ♖c2+ 46 ♖h3 ♖f7 47 c6 ♖g7 48

c7 ♖h7 49 ♖h4 ♖g7 50 g4 ½-½

Summary

A well-prepared Black player should not have problems with the lines that we have seen in this chapter.

White's alternatives to 10 ♘bd2 fall into two camps. The sharper tries 10 ♖f4 (Game 22) and 10 ♖d3 followed by ♘bd2 (Game 24-26) are double-edged, whereas the plan involving the exchange of dark-squared bishops (Games 22 and 27) is positional but not very dangerous for either colour. Recent experience suggests that the sharper tries are risky and in the case of 10 ♖f4, dubious.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6 9 c3 ♖c5

10 ♖d3

10 ♖f4 – Game 22

10 ♖e2 0-0 11 ♖c3 ♖e7 (D) – Game 23

10...0-0 11 ♘bd2

11 ♖e3 – Game 27

11...f5 12 exf6 ♘xf6 13 a4

13 ♘g5 – Game 24

13...♞b8 14 axb5 axb5 15 ♘g5 (D) ♘e5 16 ♖g3 ♖d6 17 ♖c2 ♖d7 18 ♘b3 ♖b6 19 ♖f4

19 ♘d4 h6 – Game 26

19...♞be8 20 ♘d4 ♘h5 (D) – Game 25



11... ♖e7



15 ♘g5



20... ♘h5

CHAPTER FIVE

9 c3 ♗e7: Main Line with 10 ♘bd2 ♘c5 11 ♗c2



1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♘bd2 ♘c5 11 ♗c2

This is a popular way of playing with Black. The knight on c5 hits the bishop on b3 and Black typically follows up with ...♗g4 pinning the f3-knight, which slows down White's logical kingside action. The knight may later come back to e4 or go to e6 or even a4 when challenged, depending on circumstances. White can choose as to which wing to concentrate his efforts and the play that follows often gives chances for both sides with Black preparing to react actively as soon as White creates any weaknesses.

In my experience only very well-prepared players of the white pieces manage to cause any problems as Black's position is fundamentally sound.

The move order variations in this chapter are subtle and memorising all the variations is impractical, so I believe it is best to concentrate on typical plans and manoeuvres.

Some players have experimented with ideas based on an early ...d5-d4 push, but most games continue 11...♗g4 12 ♗e1 when Black chooses between immediate castling followed by ...♗e8 or alternatively 12...♗d7 and typically ...♗d8, temporarily leaving the king in the centre. The choice comes down

to a matter of taste.

The following guide summarises White's three main strategies and how they are employed against each of Black's three main development plans.

White's three main strategies are as follows:

1. 13 ♘b3 (Games 31-32 and Game 36).
2. 13 ♘f1 without b2-b4 (Games 30 and 33-35).
3. 13 ♘f1 with b2-b4, hitting the knight on c5 (Games 37 and 38).

In Game 39 the rare tries 12 ♗e1 and 12 ♗e2 are discussed.

Black's three main development plans are:

1. A quick ...d5-d4 (Games 29 and 30).
2. 12...0-0 and generally ...♗e8 (Games 31-35).
3. 12...♗d7, delaying castling to bolster the centre (Games 36-38).

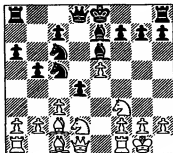
Strangely enough, none of the main games actually used the specific sequence 9 c3 ♗e7 at move nine and so I have taken the liberty of fiddling the move orders. White players often induce this variation via the fashionable move order 9 ♘bd2 ♘c5 10 c3 ♗e7 11 ♗c2, which limits Black's options (for instance, avoiding Part One) and indeed most games transposed to this chapter via that move order.

Game 29

Xie Jun-Zsu.Polgar
Cannes (10th matchgame) 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♖bd2 ♖c5 11 ♖c2 d4

The normal 11...♖g4 is the subject of Games 30-39.



12 ♖e4

12 ♖b3 has been investigated recently: 12...d3 13 ♖b1 (13 ♖xc5 transposes back to the main game) 13...♖xb3 14 axb3 ♖f5 15 ♖e3 0-0 16 ♖d4 ♖d5 17 ♖e1 ♖fd8 18 ♖e3 ♖xd4 19 cxd4 e5 20 ♖xd3 cxd4 21 ♖e2 ♖e6 22 h3 ♖d5? (Black should have prevented the redeployment of the knight by 22...♖b4 with equal chances) 23 ♖e1 a5 (after 23...♖xe5? 24 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 the fork 25 ♖f3 wins) 24 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 25 ♖d3 with a clear advantage to White in Topalov-Piket, Antwerp 1997.

Another try was 16 ♖d4 (instead of 16 ♖d4) 16...♖xd4 17 cxd4 e5 18 ♖xd3 cxd4 19 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 20 ♖xf5 ♖xb2 with unclear play in Ulibin-Daniluk, Krasnodar 1997.

Instead, Leko played very simply in his match against Khalifman (Budapest 2000): 12 cxd4 ♖xd4 13 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 14 ♖f3 ♖xd1 15 ♖xd1 ♖g4 16 ♖e3 0-0 17 h3 which doesn't look like much but White was able to win.

Theoretically speaking, Black seems to be

holding his own in these variations.

12...d3!

Much better than 12...♖d5 13 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 14 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 15 cxd4 ♖c4 16 ♖e4 ♖d7 17 ♖e1 with a clear advantage for White in Tarrasch-Post, Mannheim 1914.

The old main line ran 12...dxc3 13 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 14 ♖e4 ♖d7 15 bxc3 ♖d8 16 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 17 ♖d1 and was shown to be good for White in a couple of Capablanca-Chajes encounters: 17...♖e7 (17...0-0? fails to 18 ♖e3! ♖xe3 19 ♖xd7! ♖xd7 20 ♖xc6, as pointed out by Capablanca, and 17...♖b8 18 ♖d4 ♖e7 19 ♖e3, as in Capablanca-Chajes, New York 1916, was no improvement for Black) 18 ♖d4 h6? (objectively better is 18...♖g4, but White has the initiative after 19 ♖d3) 19 ♖b3 ♖b6 20 ♖a3 and Black cannot castle or compete for the e5-square, as in Capablanca-Chajes, New York 1915.

13 ♖xc5 dxc2 14 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8! 15 ♖xe6

Daniluk, who was responsible for introducing 12...d3, gives 15 ♖xa6? ♖c4 16 ♖e1 b4 as winning for Black, but 17 ♖xc7+ ♖d7 18 ♖d2 is not clear at all as Black isn't winning a piece.

15...fxc6 16 ♖e3

Cvetkovic considers that 16 ♖f4?! 0-0 17 ♖g3 g5! 18 ♖ac1 (18 ♖e1 gives Black dangerous play after 18...h5!) 18...♖xf3! 19 gxf3 ♖d2 offers good compensation for Black.

16...♖d5 17 ♖ac1 ♖xe5 18 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 19 ♖xc2

The continuation 19 ♖d4 ♖e2 20 ♖f1 ♖d2 21 ♖e3 ♖d5 22 ♖xc2, as in Grünfeld-Greenfeld, Biel 1999, comes to more or less the same thing, although White then tried a different plan after 22...0-0! (22...♖f7) 23 a4 ♖d6 24 g3 ♖f7 25 axb5 axb5 26 ♖a7 with slight pressure for the first player.

19...♖f7 20 c4

Another try is 20 ♖f4 ♖c5 21 ♖d1 ♖d8 22 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 23 ♖d2 ♖d5, as in Borriß-Pieper Emden, Budapest 1991, which also

ended in a draw.

20...b4!

Or 20...d6!?, as in Aktopian-Daniluk St. Petersburg 1993, when Daniluk judges the position to be equal with the plan of ...a8, ...b5xc4, ...a5-a4 giving Black sufficient activity to compensate for his inferior pawn structure.

21 d1 d8 22 xxd8 xd8 23 f1 g5

The rook ending is only equal so White tries to keep the tension.

24 a7!? f5 25 e2 e8 26 d3 d7 27 f3 c5!

Stopping the bishop from coming back easily.

28 e2 e7 29 b8 a5!

Of course 29...d6 would most likely be a draw, but now it is Black who is trying for more!

30 e4 c6 31 e5 g6 32 g4 f8 33 d2 a4 34 g3 h5 35 d3 hxg4 36 fxg4 f1 37 b3 a3 38 d2 g5 39 d3 a1 40 d2 b1 41 e5 b2 42 e1 d8

Now the players correctly repeated moves as analysis by Cvetkovic in *Informator 66* shows that it's risky for either side to avoid the draw.

43 d6+ c7 44 d2 c6 45 d6+ c7 46 d2 ½-½

Game 30
Timman-Korchnoi
Groningen 1996

1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 b5 a6 4 a4 f6 5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 b3 d5 8 dxe5 e6 9 c3 e7 10 bbd2 c5 11 c2 g4 12 e1 0-0

Here 12...d4?! is inferior, as after 13 b3 d3 14 b1 Qxb3 15 axb3 f5 we have a variation from Game 29, note to White's 12th move, except that here White has the extra move e1. This helps White to obtain an advantage after 16 e3 0-0 17 d4! Wd5 (or 17...Qxd4 18 Qxd4! g6 19 Qxd3 Qxd3 20 Qc6 Wd7 21 Qxe7+ Wxe7 22 Wxd3 with

a clear advantage – Korchnoi; note that with the rook on f1 this line is equal as the e-pawn drops) 18 e3 Qad8 19 Qxd3 Qxd4 20 cxd4 g4 21 e4 Wc6 22 Wc2 with a clear advantage for White in Geller-Anand, New Delhi 1987.

13 Qf1 d4?!

This proves inadequate here. Best is 13...e8 as in Games 34 and 35.

14 h3 h5

After 14...Qxf3 15 Wxf3 d3 16 b1 White will soon round up the advanced d-pawn.

15 Qg3 Qxf3

Now that White no longer has the same control of d2, this move is justified.

16 Wxf3 d3 17 b4!

17 b1?? loses to 17...d2, but 17 Wxc6 is possible, when the continuation 17...dxc2 18 Wf3 Qd3 19 e2 g5 20 Qxg5 Wxg5 21 Wxc2 Qxe5 22 Wc4 Qae8, Vehi Bach-Wedberg, Biel 1990, was equal.

17...dxc2 18 bxc5 Wd7

Timman rejected 18...Qxe5 19 Wxe5 Wd1+ 20 c2 d f6 because of 21 f5 threatening to take on f6. I wasn't sure about this idea when I first studied it, and nor was Open expert Mikhalevski who tried it in 1998. This game continued 21...Wfe8 22 Wxf6 (22 Qh5 may be worth a try) 22...gxf6 23 Wxf6 e6 24 Wg5+ Wg6 25 Wc5 e6 (note that White has a draw if he likes) 26 Wxc7 We1 27 a4 Wf8 28 axb5 axb5 29 Qf5 Wxf2 30 Qh6+ Qg7 31 Qg4 Wf5 32 Wg3 Wg6 33 Wc3 h5 with fascinating complications that eventually led to a draw in Y.Grünfeld-Mikhalevski, Israel Championship, Ramat Aviv 1998.

19 Qf5

With the nasty threats of 20 Wxc6 and 20 Wxd7.

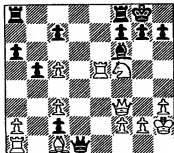
19...Qxe5

Korchnoi's attempted improvement on 19...c8 20 Wg4 g6 21 Qxe7 Wxg4 22 hxg4 Qxe7, which was bad for Black in A.Rodriguez-Wedberg, New York 1988 (the

c-pawn falls and the bishop dominates the knight).

In the main game, in return for his piece Black has installed a queen on d1, restraining White's development.

20 ♖xe5 ♖d1+ 21 ♖h2 ♖f6



22 ♖e3

Timman finds a good, but perhaps not the best, idea. Instead 22 ♖g3! (not however 22 ♖h6+ ♖h8 23 ♖f5 ♖xf3 24 ♖xf3 ♖e5+ and Black wins back the piece) can be met by 22...♖fe8 23 f4 ♖e6, when what can White do with his queenside pieces? In fact, White managed to find a winning continuation without answering this question in Magomedov-Mamadzoev, Dushanbe 1997: 24 ♖h6+ ♖f8 25 ♖xc6 fxc6 26 ♖g4 ♖e7 27 ♖f2 ♖g8 28 ♖e3 ♖xc5 29 ♖xd1!

As this line is convincing, Korchnoi's revival of 13...d4 looks frankly short-lived.

22...♖ad8

After 22...♖ae8 Timman considers 23 ♖h6+ ♖h8 24 ♖xf7+ ♖g8 25 ♖h6+ ♖h8 26 ♖g4 to be winning for White.

23 a3 a5

Renewing ideas of ...b5-b4.

24 ♖e4

24 ♖e7+ can be met by 24...♖xe7 25 ♖xe7 ♖d3 26 ♖e3 ♖d2! and White has enormous technical difficulties.

24...h5

After 24...g6 Timman points out a win for White with 25 ♖h6+ ♖g7 26 ♖g4 ♖fe8 27

♖f4.

25 ♖d4 ♖xd4 26 cxd4 ♖xd4 27 ♖a2 ♖xc1

The alternative 27...♖xe3 28 ♖xe3 should be winning for White.

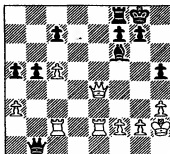
28 ♖xc2

Not 28 ♖xd4? as Black queens after 28...♖d1

28...♖b1

Korchnoi rejected an inferior ending after 28...♖xe3 29 ♖xc1 ♖xc1 30 ♖b7! b4 31 axb4 axb4 32 ♖xb4 ♖g5.

29 ♖ee2 ♖f6



30 ♖od2?

30 c6! is best when White is clearly better after 30...b4 (30...♖b8? is bad after 31 ♖f4) 31 axb4 axb4 32 ♖e1 ♖b3 33 ♖e3 ♖c3 34 ♖ce2 (Timman).

30...♖c1 31 ♖e3 b4 32 axb4 axb4 33 ♖d5

In the ending after 33 ♖d8 ♖xe3 34 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 35 ♖xe3 ♖d4 Black eliminates White's last queenside pawn and should therefore draw. In any case Black now has just about enough compensation.

33...♖c4 34 ♖d3 ♖xd3 35 ♖xd3 ♖b8 36 ♖b3 ♖b5 37 c6 ♖b6 38 ♖e4 ♖c3 39 ♖c4 ♖f8 40 ♖b1

Not 40 ♖xc3? bxc3 41 ♖xb6? as Black wins with 41...c2.

40...♖e7 41 f4 ♖e6 42 ♖d1 f5 43 g4 g6 44 ♖g3 ♖a6 ½-½

A sharp tussle in which Korchnoi was

perhaps fortunate to draw. The thematic ...d5-d4 looks playable at move eleven (Game 29) but speculative when employed any later than that.

Game 31
Z. Almasi-Korchnoi
Linz 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♘bd2 ♘c5 11 ♖c2
♗g4 12 ♖e1 0-0

The alternative 12...♗d7 is considered in Games 36-38.

13 ♘b3 ♘e4

Black offers a pawn for the bishop pair and a lead in development though in fact, Black's best try may be 13...♖e8 (see Game 32). However, 13...♘e6?! is unsatisfactory, as for instance 14 ♗d3 g6 15 ♖h6 ♖e8 16 ♖ad1 ♖f5 17 ♗d2 ♖xc2 18 ♗xc2 ♗d7 19 ♖d3 ♖ad8 20 h3 ♖f8 21 ♗d2 left Black with a passive game in Geller-Unzicker, Bad Wörishofen 1991.

14 ♖f4

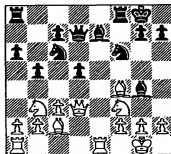
Risky is 14 ♖xe4?! dxe4 15 ♗xd8 ♖axd8 16 ♖xe4 ♖d1+ 17 ♘e1 (17 ♖e1?? loses on the spot to 17...♖xf3) 17...♖fd8 with excellent play for the pawn.

14...f6

14...f5 comes to the same thing as in the main game, while 14...♖e8 is a recent idea of Marin's. Black doesn't get full compensation after 15 ♖xe4 dxe4 16 ♖xe4 ♗xd1+ 17 ♖xd1 ♖xf3 18 gxf3 ♖ad8 19 ♖e1 (19 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 20 ♘d4 ♘xd4 21 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 22 cxd4 c6 should be a draw) 19...g5 20 ♖g3 ♘g7 21 e6 ♖xd1 22 ♖xd1 f5 23 ♖xc7 ♘f6, as in Kuczynski-Marin, Budapest Zonal 1993, but will nevertheless retain good drawing chances.

15 exf6 ♘xf6 16 ♗d3 ♗d7

A famous trap is 16...♘e4? 17 ♖xc7! (whoops!), as in Alekhine-Nimzowitsch, St Petersburg 1914.



17 ♗e5!

A clear improvement on the 'book' move, but it has been played before, both in a computer tournament in 1991(!) and a later correspondence game which we now follow for some time.

Standard theory used to continue 17 ♘g5! h6 (17...g6?! leads to a strong attack for White after 18 ♘h7 ♘xh7 19 ♗xg6+ ♘h8 20 ♖e3 ♖d6 21 ♖xd6 cxd6 22 ♖g3, as in A.Rodriguez-Milos, Bogota 1991, or simply 20 h3 - Korchnoi) 18 ♘h7 ♖f7 19 h3 (Krasenkov recommends 19 ♘xf6+ ♖xf6 20 ♗h7+ ♘f7 21 ♖g3) 19...♘h5 20 ♗g6 ♘xf4 21 ♗xg4 ♗xg4 22 hxg4 g6 (22...♖d6 is suggested by Korchnoi with the idea of meeting 23 g5 by 23...♘c5, leaving White's knight stranded) 23 g3 ♘h3+ 24 ♘g2 ♖xf2+ 25 ♘h3 ♘h7 26 ♘d4 with interesting complications that led to a draw in Large-Flear, British Ch., Eastbourne 1990.

17...♘e5 18 ♖xe5 g6 19 ♗d4 c6 20 f3

20 ♘c5 ♖xc5 21 ♗xc5 also gives White a clear positional edge.

20...♖f5 21 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 22 ♗b6!

Black now lacks the time necessary to get organised and keep everything intact. This is much more dangerous than the continuation 22 ♖g3 ♗d7 23 ♖ad1 ♘h5 24 ♖e5 ♖f7 25 ♗b6 ♖h4 26 g3 ♖d8, which led to a draw in Berglund-Yerofeev, correspondence 1995.

22...♗d7 23 a4 ♖f8 24 ♖f2

White wants to play ♖e5-d4-c5 but first

puts his queen out of danger. The alternative 24 axb5 axb5 25 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 26 ♖d4 ♖c8 27 ♖a1 looks strong at first sight but can be met by 27...♖e8 threatening ...♖d7.

24...♖f8

With ideas of coming to g4 or e4 with the knight.

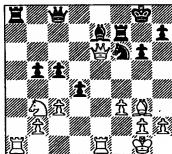
25 ♖d4

Threatening to capture first on b5, then on a8 and finally on f6, to win a piece.

25...♖c8 26 ♖g3 c5?

Almasi considers this a mistake and suggests 26...♖d8, but in any case White has a strong bind.

27 ♖e3 ♖f7 28 axb5 d4 29 ♖e6 axb5



Now a fine mini-combination to bring the last piece into the attack.

30 ♖a7! dxc3

After 30...♖xe6 31 ♖xa8+ wins a rook.

31 bxc3 c4 32 ♖d4 ♖d5 33 ♖e1! 1-0

The clearest.

A terrible blow for a variation that was hitherto considered playable. So after 13...♖e4 14 ♖f4, Marin's 14...♖e8 is objectively better than 14...f6, but it is still a bit of a grovel.

Game 32

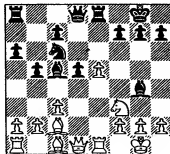
Van den Doel-Haba
Cappelle la Grande 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5

♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♖bd2 ♖c5 11 ♖c2
♖g4 12 ♖e1 0-0 13 ♖b3 ♖e8 14 ♖xc5

Topalov's move. After the critical 14 h3 ♖xb3 15 ♖d3 g6 16 ♖xb3 ♖e6 17 ♖d1 ♖d7 18 ♖xd5 ♖ad8 19 ♖e4 ♖xd3 20 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 21 ♖xd3 ♖d5 22 ♖f4 ♖c5 23 e6 fxe6 24 ♖xc7 e5 Black had adequate counterplay for the pawn in Sax-Hübner, Budapest 1991. However, Krasenkov points out the powerful 15...♖f5! 16 ♖xf5 g6 when Black is on top.

14...♖xc5



15 ♖d3

The original 14 ♖xc5 game was instructive: 15 ♖f4 ♖d7 16 h3 ♖xf3 (16...♖h5? fails to 17 ♖xh7+ ♖xh7 18 ♖g5+ ♖g6 19 ♖d3+ ♖f5 20 ♖g3 and White has a winning attack) 17 ♖xf3 ♖d8 18 ♖ad1 c6 19 h4 ♖e6 20 ♖c1 ♖f8 21 ♖g4?! (21 ♖f5 keeps the initiative) 21...f5! 22 exf6 (22 ♖xf5? ♖xf5! 23 ♖xf5 ♖f8 and Black will capture on f2, winning back the sacrificed material with a good game) 22...♖xf6 23 ♖e3 ♖af8 24 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 25 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 and Black had equalised in Topalov-I.Sokolov, Antwerp 1997.

15...g6?! 16 ♖f4 ♖f5 17 ♖d2 ♖xc2 18 ♖xc2 ♖d7 19 ♖ad1 ♖d8 20 h3

Haba suggests 20 c4 as slightly better for White. However, 20...bxc4 21 ♖xc4 dxc4 22 ♖xd7 ♖e6 is fully satisfactory for Black, who has an the interesting plan of ...♖b6, followed by ...♖c5-d3.

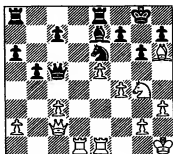
20...Qe6 21 ♖h6 ♕e7 22 Qh2 ♖c6

22...f5 23 exf6 ♖xf6 24 Qg4 ♖h8 is a shade better for White after 25 Qe5 ♖xe5 26 ♖xe5 c6.

23 Qg4 d4 24 f4 ♖c5

24...dxc3 25 f5 Qg5 was possible, aiming for complications.

25 ♖h1 dxc3 26 bxc3



26...♖ad8?

Natural but bad. Better was 26...Qg7, holding up the central pawns or at least forcing the exchange of one of White's dangerous minor pieces.

27 f5! ♖xd1 28 ♖xd1 Qd8

A bad sign but 28...gxf5 29 ♖xf5 ♖c6 30 Qf6+ ♖xf6 31 ♖xf6 ♖e4 loses to 32 ♖d4! (Faba).

29 ♖e3 ♖c4 30 Qh6+ ♖h8 31 e6

Levering open Black's king.

31...f6

31...♖g7 32 Qg4 gxf5 33 exf7 Qxf7 34 ♖xf5 also looks difficult for Black.

32 fxg6 ♖xe6 33 ♖f4

33 gxf7! was even better as 33...♖xe3 loses to 34 ♖g6.

33...♖d6 34 ♖xd6 cxd6 35 gxf7 Qf7 36 Qf5

But not 36 Qxf7+ ♖xf7 37 ♖xd6 because of 37...♖e1+ 38 ♖h2 ♖c7 pinning and winning.

36...♖e2 37 ♖b3 Qg5 38 Qxd6 ♖e6 39 ♖d5 ♖f2

Objectively better was 39...♖xh7, but

Black, a clear pawn down and with an exposed king, was almost certainly lost anyway.

40 Qf7+! 1-0

Game 33

Ivanchuk-Tukmakov

New York 1988

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 Qf6
5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 Qbd2 Qc5 11 ♖c2
Qg4 12 ♖e1 0-0 13 Qf1 ♖h5

This is considered less accurate than 13...♖e8 (considered in the next main game) as Black tends to become rather passive, as we shall see.

14 Qg3

The actual move order was 14 ♖e3 ♖g6 15 Qg3, but 14 ♖e3 allows 14...Qxe5 when best play leads to a draw (as analysed by Ivanchuk): 15 ♖xc5 Qxf3+ 16 ♖xf3 ♖xf3 17 ♖xe7 ♖d7 18 ♖xf8 ♖xg2 19 ♖c5 ♖xf1 20 ♖xf1 ♖h3+ 21 ♖g1 ♖g4+ 22 ♖h1.

14...♖g6 15 ♖e3



Here 15 Qf5 ♖d7 16 g4 ♖ad8 17 h4 Qe4 18 Qxe7+ Qxe7 19 Qh2, as in Kupreichik-Kaidanov, Kuibyshev 1986, and now 19...f5! 20 f3 fxg4 21 fxe4 g3 22 Qg4 ♖h5 (Korchnoi) or 17 Q3d4 (instead of 17 h4) 17...Qxd4 18 cxd4 Qe6 19 f4 ♖b4 20 ♖f1 f6, as in Van Mil-Kotronias, Sonnevanck 1992, are both double-edged.

15...e8

After the alternative 15...Wd7 a new idea is 16 e6 (instead, 16 h4 Qe6 17 h5 e2 18 Wxc2 f6 19 exf6 e6 20 h6 offers a very slight pull to White according to Korchnoi) when White continued naturally and maintained an edge in Svidler-L.Sokolov, Pula 1997, after 16...hxg6 17 Wc2 Qe6 18 b4 a5 19 a3 Bf8 20 Qad1 axb4 21 axb4 Qcd8 22 h4 Wc6 23 Wb3 Wc4 24 Wxc4 dxc4 25 Qe4 Qf8 26 g3 Qa3 27 Qg2.

16 h4

The most aggressive, but 16 Qc1, just developing the last piece, has been played with some success. Matanovic then suggests 16...Wd7 17 b4 e2 followed by ...Qa4 but still prefers White.

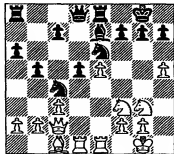
16...e2

Or 16...e6 17 e5 Wd7 18 e6! (instead 18 h5 e2 19 Wxc2 h6 20 Qad1 Wg4! 21 e1 Qad8, as in Henaio-Milos, Bogota 1991, was solid for Black) 18...hxg6 19 h5 gxh5 20 Qxh5 Qc6 21 e3 and again White has the better options (Henaio).

17 Wxc2 Qd7 18 e4! Qf8

18...Qxh4 is tempting but Ivanchuk considers it too risky to grab the h-pawn because of 19 Qf5 e7 20 e6 Qf8 21 exf7+ Qxf7 22 Qad1 when White has a strong initiative.

19 h5 Qe6 20 e3 Qa5 21 Qad1 Qc4 22 e1



White is well co-ordinated and has long-

term pressure against the centre and kingside. In return Black has a fairly solid position but no real counterplay.

22...e5 23 Wf5 Qa7

Ivanchuk instead recommends 23...Wd7 24 Qe4 Qad8 25 Qg4 Qh8! when White cannot take the f-pawn nor easily increase the pressure.

24 Qe4 Qb6 25 Qeg5 e6 26 e6 Wc8 27 e3 h6

An error but after 27...Qd7 28 b3 it's not so easy to find anything positive for Black to do.

28 Qh4!

Heading for f5.

28...Qc7 29 Wg4 Qg5 30 Qf5

The kingside is about to collapse.

30...Qxe5 31 e4 Wxf5 32 Wxf5 Qxf5 33 e6 Qd7 34 f4 Qe6 35 g4 Qxc7 36 gxh5 Qf8 37 Qe2 Qb8 38 Qe5 1-0

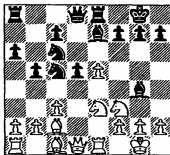
An example of what to avoid with Black!

Game 34

Wang Zili-Yusupov

Novi Sad Olympiad 1990

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 e6 a6 4 e4 Qf6 5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 e3 d5 8 dxe5 e6 9 c3 e7 10 Qbd2 Qc5 11 e2 e6 12 Qe1 0-0 13 Qf1 Qe8!



14 Qe3

Most games continue with 14 h3, when after 14...e5 White chases the bishop with

15 ♖g3 or 15 g4, as in Game 35.

Here we discuss the alternatives:

a) 14 b4?! is too weakening to worry Black, e.g. 14...♗e4! 15 ♖g3 ♜xe5 16 ♜xe4 ♙xf3 17 gxf3 dxe4 18 fxe4 ♙f6 (White has the two bishops but serious problems with his structure, thus Black is already better) 19 ♙f4 ♖g6 20 ♖xd8 ♠axd8 21 ♙xc7 ♠c8 22 e5 ♜xe5 23 ♙xe5 ♠xe5 24 ♠xe5 ♙xe5 25 ♙b3 g6 26 ♠c1 ♙xc3 27 a4, when the opposite-coloured bishops earned White a draw in Yemelin-Korneev, Russian Championship, St Petersburg 1998. Naturally Korneev didn't want to risk falling into his opponent's preparation with the risky-looking 15...♜xc3!? but it seems playable: 16 ♖d3 g6 17 ♖xc3 ♙xb4 18 ♖xc6 ♠e6 (18...♙xf3 19 ♙a3!) 19 ♖d4 ♠xc6 20 ♜xc6 ♖f8 with an unclear material balance.

b) After 14 ♙f4 ♙h5 15 ♖e3, Black has 15...d4 which simplifies comfortably, e.g. 16 cxd4 ♙xf3 17 ♖xf3 ♜xd4 18 ♖g3 ♜xc2 19 ♜xc2 ♖d3 20 ♖e3 c6 21 ♠ed1 ½-½ Henao-Ch.Toth, Bogota 1991.

14...♜xe5

The exchange 14...♙xf3 is given as bad by everyone, but perhaps unfairly, and certainly not for the real reason! Then 15 ♖xf3 ♜xe5 16 ♖xd5 (the best way may be 16 ♖f5! ♖g6 17 ♜xd5 ♙d6 18 ♠xe8+ ♖xe8 19 ♙e3 ♖e6 20 ♠d1 ♠d8 21 g3 with a comfortable edge due to the bishop pair in Adams-Gi.Garcia, New York 1995) 16...♜ed3 17 ♠d1 'with a clear advantage' according to Yusupov, but 17...♖xd5 (certainly not 17...♜xc1? due to 18 ♙xh7+ ♗xh7 19 ♖h5+) 18 ♜xd5 ♙d6 and Black is okay (Flear). Instead 14...♙e6?! is too passive and loses time.

15 ♙xh7+

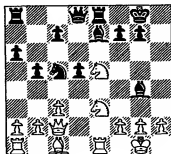
In order to unpin. The inferior 15 ♜xg4?! has been played but White really doesn't have enough compensation for the pawn.

15...♗xh7 16 ♖c2+ ♗g8

Yusupov points out that 16...♜ed3 17 ♜xg4 f5 fails to 18 ♠d1 fxg4 19 ♖e5 and White recovers the piece with an excellent

game.

17 ♜xe5



17...♙e6

Natural but Korchnoi recently tried 17...♙h5!? and was at least equal after 18 ♖f5 ♙f6 19 ♖c6 ♙g6 20 ♖xg6 fxg6 21 ♜xd8 ♠axd8 22 ♠d1 d4 with an active position in Leko-Korchnoi, Ubeda 1998.

18 ♖c6

18 ♖f5!? looks interesting. After 18...♙xf5?! (18...♙f8! should be equal) 19 ♖xf5 ♙f6 20 ♙f4 ♙xe5 21 ♙xe5 c6 22 ♠e3 Black had problems in Daly-Glodeanu, Bucharest 1993.

18...♖d6 19 ♜xe7+ ♠xe7

Commentators are unanimous that Black has an equal game here.

20 b3 ♖d7 21 ♙b2

21 a4 is preferred by Yusupov who prefers Black from now on. It's instructive to see how Black expands the queenside, not to create a passed pawn but to annex the d3-square.

21...♠ae8 22 ♠ad1 c5 23 f3 ♖e5 24 ♖f2 c4! 25 ♖g3 f6

Everything holds together nicely and Yusupov is ready to further expand his majority.

26 ♠d4 ♖c5 27 bxc4 dxc4 28 ♖c2 a5 29 ♙a3?

29 ♗h1 holds out longer.

29...b4 30 cxb4 ♖a7

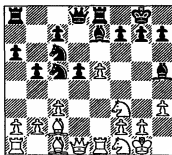
The pin is decisive.

31 b5 ♖d7 32 ♖ee4 ♖f5 33 ♖f2 ♖xe4
34 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 35 fxe4 ♖d1+ 36 ♖e1
♖d3 0-1

So the 14th move alternatives to 14 h3
don't worry Black.

Game 35
Svidler-Adianto
Groningen 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♖bd2 ♖c5 11 ♖c2
♖g4 12 ♖e1 0-0 13 ♖f1 ♖e8 14 h3 ♖h5



15 ♖g3

The other method of pushing back the
bishop is 15 g4, when 15...♖g6 16 ♖xg6
hxg6 17 ♖e3 ♖d7 18 ♖xd5 (18 b4?! is again
too weakening due to 18...♖a4 19 ♖xd5
♖ad8 and Black has good activity for the
pawn, e.g. 20 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 21 ♖c2 ♖d7 22
♖g2 ♖d3 23 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 winning back the
pawn with interest in Onischuk-Timman,
Wijk aan Zee 1997. If immediately 18 ♖xd5
then after 18...♖ad8 19 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 20 ♖e2
♖d5 Black has the added option ...♖d3.)
18...♖ad8 19 ♖d1 ♖e6 20 ♖xe6 fxe6 21
♖d4 (on 21 ♖g2 then 21...♖xd1 22 ♖xd1
♖d3 wins back the pawn with equal play)
21...♖xe5 22 f4 ♖f7 23 ♖f1 (23 b4 ♖a4 24
♖xe6 ♖xd1+ 25 ♖xd1 ♖f6 gives Black all
the play) 23...♖f6 24 ♖ec2 e5 and Black
opened up the game to his advantage in

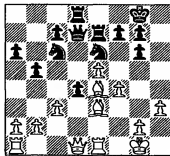
Wahls-Hübner, Munich 1991.

Instead 15 b4!? led to unclear play after
15...♖e4! 16 ♖e3 ♖xf3 17 gxf3 ♖xf2 18
♖xf2 ♖h4+ 19 ♖f1 ♖xe1 20 ♖xe1 ♖xe5
21 ♖g3 ♖f6 22 ♖xd5 ♖e6 23 ♖e3 ♖c4 24
♖e4 ♖ad8 25 ♖f5 ♖f6 in Sznapiak-
Gi.Garcia, Salamanca 1988.

15...♖g6 16 ♖f5 ♖e4!?

An interesting try of Timman's. Safer
seems to be 16...♖f8! 17 ♖f4 ♖c6 (17...♖d7
was less convincing in Spraggett-Korneev,
San Sebastian 1999, as White had a useful
initiative after 18 ♖h4 ♖a4 19 ♖b1 ♖b6 20
♖g4!) 18 ♖h2 ♖a5 19 ♖e3 c6 20 ♖d4
♖xd4 21 cxd4 ♖c4 22 b3 ♖xe3 23 ♖xe3 c5
24 ♖xg6 hxg6 25 dxc5 ♖xc5 26 ♖d3 d4 with
equal play in Wahls-Hübner, Germany 1991.
17 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 18 ♖f4 ♖d7 19 ♖h4
♖c5

After 19...♖ae8 White can safely grab the
pawn with 20 ♖xg6 hxg6 21 ♖xe4 dxe4 22
♖xd7 ♖xd7 23 ♖xe4 (Svidler).
20 ♖xg6 hxg6 21 ♖e3 ♖e6 22 f4 d4 23
♖e4 ♖d8



24 ♖f2!

Svidler's improvement on Van den Doel-
Timman, Dutch Championship, Rotterdam
1997, which continued 24 ♖c1 ♖c5 25 ♖f3
♖e6 and Black was doing very well.

The text keeps the pressure on d4 and
threatens 25 ♖h4.

24...♖ee8 25 ♖g4 ♖e7

25...dxc3 loses material to 26 ♖ad1.

26 h4 c5 27 ♖ad1 ♕d5 28 f5

The two bishops keep Black occupied in the centre, which in time gives White the chance to prise open the black king.

28...gxf5 29 ♖xf5 ♕f8 30 ♖f3

Now it's cashing-in time as Black cannot avoid losing the d-pawn.

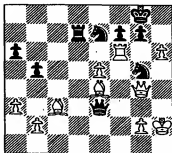
30...♖e6 31 cxd4 cxd4 32 ♖xd4 ♕e7

33 a3 ♖d7 34 ♖c3 ♖e8 35 ♖xd7 ♖xd7

36 h5 ♕h7 37 ♖g3 ♖b6+ 38 ♖h2 ♖h6

39 ♖g4 ♕f8 40 ♖f1 ♕e6 41 ♖f6 ♖e3 42

h6 ♕g5



Combination time: How does White finish off the job?

43 e6! fxe6 44 ♖xg5! 1-0

With the point 44...♖xg5 45 h7+ ♖h8 46 ♖f8+ and mates.

Game 36
Ehlvest-Hjartarson
Belfort 1988

1 e4 e5 2 ♕f3 ♕c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♕f6
5 0-0 ♕xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♕bd2 ♕c5 11 ♖c2
♖g4 12 ♖e1 ♖d7

Compared to 12...0-0, Black is better prepared to support the d-pawn with ...♖d8 after this move. However, the king stays longer in the centre and the king's rook cannot come as quickly to the natural e8-square.

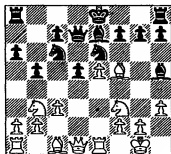
13 ♕b3

We saw the idea of 13 ♕b3 against 12...0-0 in Games 31 and 32.

13...♕e6 14 h3

White can equally play 14 ♖d3 (stopping Black from castling kingside for the time being) 14...♖h5 15 ♕fd4 ♕cxd4 (15...♖g6 16 ♕f5 0-0 17 ♖h3 ♖fe8 18 ♖d1 ♖f8 19 ♕h4 ♖ad8 20 f4 ♖e4 21 ♖e3 ♖e7 22 ♖g4 was dangerous for Black in Zso.Polgar-Hracek, Brno 1991) 16 ♕xd4 ♖g6 17 ♕f5 ♖d8 18 ♖g3 with a complicated game in Hazai-Diesen, Helsinki 1989.

14...♖h5 15 ♖f5



15...♕cd8

After 15...♖d8 16 ♕bd4 0-0 the blow 17 ♖xh7+! leads to a dangerous attack: 17...♖xh7 18 ♕g5+ ♖xg5 19 ♖xh5+ ♖h6 20 ♖xh6 gxf6 21 ♕f5 ♖h8 22 ♖xh6+ ♖g8 23 ♖f6 ♖h7 24 ♖e3 ♖f8 25 ♖g3, as in L.Ivanov-Sagalchik, USSR 1989.

However, after the immediate 15...0-0 this combination is only worth a draw: 16 ♖xh7+ ♖xh7 17 ♕g5+ ♖xg5 18 ♖xh5+ ♖h6 19 ♖xh6 gxf6 20 ♖f5+ ♖h8 (20...♖g8 provokes 21 ♖e3) 21 ♖f6+ ♖h7 22 ♖f5+, as in Ilincic-Lalic, Yugoslav Championship 1989.

Another try is 15...♖g6 16 ♕fd4 0-0 (Krasenkov recommends 16...♕cxd4 17 ♕xd4 0-0 and then ...c7-c5) 17 ♖g4 ♕cxd4 18 cxd4 a5 19 f4, when Nunn-Tal, Naestved 1985, continued 19...h5 (Korchnoi instead suggests 19...a4 20 ♕c5 ♖c6 21 ♖xe6 fxe6

22 ♟e3 ♟xc5 23 ♞c1, which limits White to an edge) 20 ♟xh5 ♟xh5 21 ♞xh5 a4 22 ♞c5 ♞xc5 23 dxc5 ♟xc5+ 24 ♟e3 ♟xe3+ 25 ♞xe3 f5 26 e6 and White was on top.

16 ♟e3 a5

An interesting alternative is 16...♞b7 17 ♞e2 c5 18 ♞ad1 ♞d8 19 ♞bd2 ♞c6 20 g4 ♟g6 21 ♞f1 0-0 22 ♞g3 ♞a5 23 b3 ♞b6 24 h4 d4 with complex play in Sigurjonsson-Stean, Munich 1979. Minic suggests 25 ♟d2 here, as with the game continuation 25 cxd4 cxd4 26 ♟c1 ♟b4 27 ♞f1 ♞c6 28 h5 ♟xf5 29 gxf5 things should have been unclear after 29...♞c7 30 ♞e4 ♞d5 31 ♞g4 ♞h8.

17 ♞c5

Or 17 ♟c5 a4 18 ♟xe7 ♞xe7 19 ♞bd2 c6 20 b4 ♞g5 21 ♞e2 g6 22 ♟d3 (22 ♟g4?! ♟xg4 23 hxg4 ♞de6 24 ♞e3 h5 favoured Black in Karpov-Korchnoi, Baguio City [28th matchgame] 1978) 22...♞de6 with equal chances (Korchnoi).

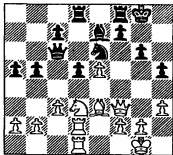
17...♞c6

Black may do best to play 17...♟xc5! 18 ♟xc5 ♟g6 19 ♟g4 h5 20 ♟xe6 ♞xe6 21 ♟e3 c5, as in Zarnicki-Sorokin, Villa Gesell 1996, when he has counter-chances due to the queenside majority. Black later pushed his d-pawn and went on to win.

18 ♞d3 ♟xf3 19 ♞xf3 g6 20 ♟g4

20 ♟xe6 fxe6 is unclear (Ehlvest).

20...h5 21 ♟xe6 ♞xe6 22 ♞ad1 ♞d8 23 ♞d2 0-0 24 ♞ed1



White has maintained an edge. He has

pressure on the d-file and Black has no counterplay.

24...♞g5?

A positional error. By exchanging the blockading piece Black can no longer stop the e-pawn's 'lust to expand' (with e5-e6) whereupon the g6-pawn is fatally undermined. Instead 24...♞d7 is recommended by Ehlvest, when Black is ready to support the centre with ...c7-c6 if necessary. In that case Black's game would be solid, albeit rather passive.

25 ♟xg5 ♟xg5 26 ♞e2 ♞fe8 27 ♞g3 ♟h6 28 ♞de1 ♞h7?

28...♞e6 holds out longer but 29 f4 ♞h7 30 f5 gxf5 31 ♞f3 crashes through all the same.

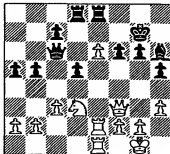
29 e6!

Threatening to come to e5 with the knight.

29...f6

Or 29...♟xe6 30 ♟xe6 fxe6 31 ♞e5 ♞e8 32 ♞xg6! ♞xg6 33 ♞xc7+ and White wins material (Ehlvest).

30 ♞f3 ♞g7



Black looks as if he can hold it together but Ehlvest finds a way through.

31 ♞e5! fxe5 32 ♞f7+ ♞h8 33 ♟xe5

Despite the extra piece Black's queen and rooks cannot mount a defence for very long. The strong e-pawn cuts the communication in the black camp.

33...♟g8 34 e7 ♞de8 35 ♞e6 ♞d7 36

♠xg6 ♠xg6 37 ♜xg6 ♠g7 38 ♜f7!

Black is totally tied up and White wants to bring his rook to the h-file.

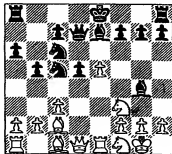
38...d4 39 cxd4 ♠xd4 40 ♞e6 ♠g7 41 g3 1-0

This stops any first rank nonsense and prepares ♞e6-e4-h4. Black is totally paralysed and therefore resigned.

A fine win by the Estonian Grandmaster, but not exactly what an Open player wants to repeat! Possible improvements for Black are 15...♠g6, 15...0-0 (but this allows a draw), 16...♟b7 or 17...♠xc5 (which is complex and yields double-edged play). If none of this suits the critical reader, then 12...0-0 is recommended.

Game 37
Haba-Marin
Budapest Zonal 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♟c6 3 ♠b5 a6 4 ♠a4 ♟f6
5 0-0 ♟xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♠b3 d5 8 dxe5
♠e6 9 c3 ♠e7 10 ♟bd2 ♟c5 11 ♠c2
♠g4 12 ♞e1 ♜d7 13 ♟f1



White intends a dangerous plan; coming to e3 with gain of time. It's generally recognised that going via f1 after the intermediate 13 h3 ♠h5 is less effective, e.g. 14 ♟f1? ♞d8 15 ♠e3 (after 15 ♟g3 ♠g6 16 ♠e3 0-0 17 ♠xc5 ♠xc5 18 a4 f6 19 e6 ♜d6, as in Borngasser-Behrmann, West Germany 1985/86, Black has good play; the e6-pawn is

more of a weakness than an asset) 15...♟e6 16 g4 ♠g6 17 ♠f5 0-0 18 ♟g3 ♟a5 19 h4 ♟c4 20 ♠c1 h6!, as in Gavrikov-Kharitonov, Sverdlovsk 1984, with an unclear position.

Heading the other way with 13 ♟b3 (or 13 h3 ♠h5 14 ♟b3) is another promising idea, as we saw in Game 36.

13...♞d8

After 13...♠h5 14 ♟g3! (now this is the right way, as Black loses time) 14...♠g6 15 h4! (15 ♟d4 ♠xc2 16 ♜xc2 0-0 17 ♟f5 ♞fe8 also looks reasonable and at first sight most White players would be happy here. However, piece play alone is insufficient to maintain the pressure, e.g. 18 ♞e3 ♠f8 19 ♟xc6 ♜xc6 20 ♟d4 ♜d7 21 b4 ♟e6 22 ♞h3 g6 23 ♠e3 c5 and Black had equalised in Prandstetter-Priehoda, Prague 1990.) 15...0-0 16 h5 ♠xc2 17 ♜xc2 f5 18 exf6 ♠xf6, as in Mokry-Yusupov, Dubai Olympiad 1986, and now 19 h6 g6 20 ♠g5 gives White an edge. The presence of the pawn on h6 will be a cause for concern for Black even deep into the ending.

14 ♟e3 ♠h5 15 b4!

This plan seems to leave Black with a passive game and has been largely responsible for the fact that nowadays Open players generally prefer 12...0-0 and 13...♞e8.

The alternative 15 ♟f5 is covered in Game 38.

15...♟e6 16 g4

The alternative continuation 16 ♟f5 0-0 (after 16...d4 the move 17 ♠e4! stymies Black's counterplay) 17 a4 ♠g6 18 g4 (instead 18 ♠e3 d4! 19 axb5 axb5 20 ♟5xd4 ♟xc4 21 ♟xd4 ♠xb4 22 ♠xg6 hxg6 23 ♜b3 ♟xd4 24 ♠xd4 ♠c7 was equal in Vasquez-Marin, Andorra 1991) transposes back to the main game.

Black can vary with 17...♞fe8?! but this leads to a long forcing line with an unpleasant ending for Black: 18 axb5 axb5 19 ♜d3 ♠g6 20 ♜xb5 ♟xe5 21 ♜xd7 ♟xd7 (not 21...♟xf3?? 22 gxf3 ♞xd7 23 ♠a4) 22

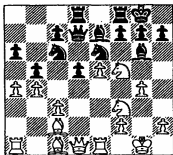
♖xe7+ ♜xc7 23 ♖xg6 hxg6 24 ♖d4 ♜ee8 25 ♖c6, as in A.Rodriguez-Marin, Novi Sad Olympiad 1990, when the simplification has not liberated the black position.

Another dubious Black try is 17...f6! 18 axb5 axb5, as in Cuartas-Pilgaard, Ubeda 1998, which looks bad for Black after 19 ♖d3!

16...♖g6 17 ♖f5 0-0

The continuation 17...h5 18 h3 d4 (18...hxg4 19 hxg4 ♖f8! 20 ♖g2 f6! worked in the game Abramovic-Flear, Val Maubúe 1989, but leaves me unconvinced) 19 ♖e4 ♖f8 20 a4 left Black with serious problems to solve in Hjartarson-Korchnoi, St John (1st matchgame) 1988.

18 a4



18...d4!?

Black has worked diligently to get this thematic counter going, but it probably isn't quite good enough for equality.

The alternative 18...♜f8 should be studied closely, e.g. 19 axb5 axb5 20 ♖d3 ♜b8 21 ♖e2 ♖cd8 22 ♜a7 d4 23 cxd4 ♖xf5 24 gxf5 ♖xd4 25 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 26 ♜xc7 ♖xb4 27 ♖b2 ♖f4 28 ♖c3 ♖xc3 29 ♜xc3 ♜e7! (not 29...b4 30 ♜c4 ♖h6 31 ♜g4 with a strong attack in Shabalov-Sorin, Biel 1992) 30 ♖b1 g6 31 ♜g3, as in Zarnicki-Sorin, Argentine Championship 1996, when after 31...♖c6 Black had counterplay against the centre and managed to draw. This move 20...♜b8 looks more convincing for Black

than 20...♖b8 21 ♖e3 c5 (21...d4 is complicated but inadequate, e.g. 22 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 23 ♖3xd4 ♖xb4 24 ♖xb5 c6 25 ♖xc6 ♖xf5 26 gxf5 ♖xc3 27 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 28 ♖xd8 ♜xd8 29 e6! and White is close to winning according to Galkin) 22 bxc5 ♖xc5 23 ♖e2 ♖xc3 24 ♖xc3 ♖c7 25 ♜a7 ♖c6 26 ♖d6! and Black was in deep trouble in Galkin-Sorokin, Ekaterinburg 1997, as 26...♜xd6 is met by 27 ♜xc7 ♖xc7 28 exd6.

19 axb5 axb5 20 ♖e4 ♜fe8 21 ♖d3!

This is annoying for Black as the b5-pawn requires defending. Less effective is 21 ♖e3 ♖f8 22 ♖d2 h5 23 h3 ♖xb4 24 cxb4 dxe3 25 ♖xd7 exf2+ 26 ♖xf2 ♜xd7 27 ♖c6 ♜dd8 28 ♜eb1 ♖f4 29 ♖xe8 ♜xe8 30 ♖g3 ♖e2+ 31 ♖f2 ♖f4 32 ♖g3 ♖e2+ 33 ♖f2 ♖f4 with a draw in Palkovi-Marin, Stara Zagora 1990.

21...♖b8 22 ♖d2

Not best. Instead 22 cxd4! ♖xb4 (probably better than 22...♖xd4 23 ♖3xd4 ♖xf5 24 ♖xf5 ♖xd3 25 ♖xd3 ♜xd3 26 ♖xe7+ ♜xe7 27 ♜a8 with a clear advantage for White due to the bad knight - Haba) 23 ♜d1 c6 24 ♖e3 ♖f8 and White keeps the better prospects (Korchnoi). This hasn't been tested but is the critical assessment for Black's set-up. The central/kingside bind is more immediately important than any long-term prospects offered by a queenside outside passed pawn, but at least Black has something to play for.

22...c5 23 cxd4 ♖xd4 24 ♖3xd4 ♖xf5!

On 24...cxd4 then 25 ♜a5 picks up the b5-pawn.

25 ♖xf5

25 gxf5 ♖xd4 26 ♖xd4 ♜xd4 gives Black sufficient counter-chances.

25...♖xd3 26 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 27 ♖xe7+ ♜xe7 28 ♜a8

Black has temporary problems with his badly placed knight but as soon as it's liberated, White's pawns prove to be too weak to claim a significant advantage.

28...♜e8 29 ♖f4 ♜d4 30 ♖g3 ♖f8 31 bxc5 ½-½

31 bxc5 ♖c6 32 ♖a6 ♖b4 33 ♖d6 ♖xg4 is fairly unclear, but some White players, with a more ambitious frame of mind, may prefer to play on here.

This line has been deeply investigated and theoretically may just favour White. However, in practical play a well prepared Open Ruy Lopez player can probably get by, as White has to play very precisely to maintain an edge.

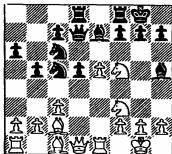
Game 38
A. Sokolov-Korchnoi
Tilburg 1987

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♖bd2 ♖c5 11 ♖c2
♖g4 12 ♖e1 ♖d7 13 ♖f1 ♖d8 14 ♖e3
♖h5 15 ♖f5

The stronger 15 b4! was considered in Game 37.

15...0-0

For 15...♖e6 16 b4! (Black doesn't mind 16 a4 b4! 17 a5 ♖a7 18 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 19 ♖d3 ♖b5, as in Aseev-Agzamov, USSR 1984) see Game 37, note to White's 16th move.



16 ♖xe7+

Alternatively:

a) The aggressive 16 h4!? ♖g4 17 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 18 ♖d4 ♖xf3 19 gxf3 ♖e6 20 ♖g4 d4 was very sharp and unclear in Ady-Flear, Barnsdale 1989.

b) 16 b4 can now be met with 16...♖e4! with satisfactory counterplay; in Yudasin-Petran, Budapest 1982.

- c) After the innocent-looking 16 h3 then 16...♖fe8? is too routine (playable instead are either 16...♖g6 or the introductory 16...♖e6 17 ♖e3 and only then 17...♖fe8, as after the further 18 g4 ♖g6 19 a4 ♖c5 the game Brodsky-Marin, Bucharest 1994, was unclear) 17 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 (17...♖xe7 fails to 18 ♖g4 ♖g6 19 ♖g5) 18 ♖xh7+! ♖xh7 19 ♖g5+ ♖g6 20 g4 with advantage to White (Marin). 16...♖xe7

After 16...♖xe7? 17 ♖g5!, as in A.Rodriguez-Gi.Garcia, Bayamo 1987, White wins at least a pawn.

17 b4

Two other moves have been tried here:

a) 17 ♖d4? ♖xf3 18 gxf3 ♖e6 19 ♖h4 ♖g6 20 ♖g4 d4 turned out better for Black in Grünfeld-Korchnoi, Zagreb Interzonal 1987.

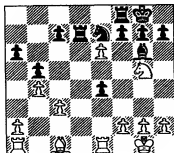
b) 17 ♖e3 is a tricky move, when 17...♖e4 is playable, as is 17...♖a4 when 18 ♖xh7+ (the simplistic 18 ♖xa4 bxa4 19 ♖c5 ♖fe8 20 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 only yields equal chances [Korchnoi] as White cannot exploit the doubled a-pawns and Black has counter-chances on the b-file; while 18 ♖d3?! can be met energetically by 18...♖g6! 19 b3 ♖xf3 20 gxf3 ♖h3! and Black stood well in Van der Wiel-Hjartarson, Rotterdam 1989; and finally 18 ♖b1 ♖g6 19 ♖d3, as in Adams-Flear, Leeds 1988, should be met by 19...♖xf3 20 gxf3 ♖de8 with advantage to Black) is well defended by 18...♖xh7 19 e6 ♖xf3! 20 ♖c2+ ♖e4 and Black wins.

However, the natural 17...♖e6? fails to 18 ♖xh7+! ♖xh7 19 ♖g5+ ♖g6 20 g4 and Black was struggling in Geller-Hazai, Sochi 1982. The combination works if the queen on d7 no longer defends g4.

17...♖e4

Korchnoi once blundered with 17...♖a4?? (he obviously became confused with the lines in the previous note) 18 ♖xh7+! ♖xh7 19 e6

1-0 Hübner-Korchnoi, Tilburg 1987, since after 19...♟e6 (19...♟xf3 20 ♖d3+! ♟c4 21 ♖h3+ wins; compare to lines where White has already played ♟e3 when this manoeuvre is not possible) 20 ♖g5+ ♟g6 21 g4 the attack is overwhelming.
18 ♟xe4 dxe4 19 ♖xd7 ♟xd7 20 ♖g5 ♟g6 21 e6!



The simplification has led to an ending in which this move gives White a slight pull.

21...♟d3

Korchnoi prefers White after 21...♟e6 22 ♖xc6 ♟f7 23 a4 ♟d6 24 ♖g5 ♟f8 25 ♟e3 with the point that 25...h6 can be met by 26 ♖xc4! ♟xe4 27 ♟c5 ♟e6 28 ♟f3 ♟f4 29 axb5 axb5 30 ♟xe7 ♟xe7 31 ♟e3! calmly increasing the pressure.

22 exf7+ ♟xf7 23 ♖xe4 ♖d5 24 f3

24 a3 ♖xc3 25 ♖xc3 ♟xc3 26 ♟e3 ♟e8 27 ♟ed1 gave White a small but persistent edge, despite the opposite-coloured bishops, in Hübner-Zak, Lugano 1989.

24...♟g6 25 ♟f2 ♟e8

Black has good play for his pawn and in any case the c3-pawn will fall.

26 a4?!

26 ♖c5 is more testing, when after 26...♟xc3 27 ♟xe8+ ♟xe8 28 ♟d2 ♟c2 29 ♟e1 a5 30 a3 White is not worse.

26...♟xe4 27 ♟xe4 ♟xe4 28 ♟xe4 ♖xc3 29 axb5 axb5

The target of the isolated e-pawn and good piece activity offers Black the winning

chances.

30 e5

30 ♟a7 also favours the second player after 30...♖xc4+ 31 ♟e2 ♟d4 32 ♟xc7 ♟xb4. 30...♟f7 31 ♟a6 ♖e4+ 32 ♟e2 ♟c3 33 ♟e3 ♟e7 34 ♟d4?

34 ♟a8! ♟c4 35 ♟g8 ♟f7 36 ♟d8 is recommended by Korchnoi. White must stay active!

34...♟c4 35 ♟d3 ♖g5 36 ♟c5+ ♟d7 37 ♟a5 ♟c6 38 ♟a6+ ♟d5 39 ♟a5 ♖e6 40 ♟xb5 ♖xc5+ 41 bxc5 ♟xc5 42 ♟xc5+?

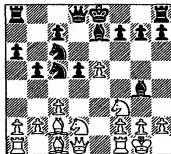
The final error. Sokolov obviously misjudged the rook ending after 42 ♟b8, which is not good but may be tenable.

42...♟xc5 43 ♟a4 ♟c6! 44 h4 ♟d7 45 ♟d5 h5 46 e6+ ♟e7 47 ♟c6 ♟xe6 48 ♟xc7 ♟f5 49 ♟d6 ♟g4 50 ♟e5 ♟xh4 51 ♟f4 g6 52 ♟f3 g5 0-1

Game 39

Pedersen-Magomedov Cappelle la Grande 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♟b5 a6 4 ♟a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♟b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♟e6 9 c3 ♟e7 10 ♖bd2 ♖c5 11 ♖c2 ♟g4



12 ♖e1

12 ♖c2, intending either 13 ♖e3 (unpinning) or 13 ♟d1 (pressure on the d-file), is worthy of closer study, although

Black seems to be able to cope after 12...♖d7 and now:

a) 13 ♖d1 ♖d8 14 ♠f1 d4 (or 14...0-0 15 ♖e3 ♖xe5 16 ♜xd5, as in Shamkovich-McLaughlin, Chicago 1988, and now Korchnoi's 16...♞e6! looks better for Black, although theory says its only equal) 15 ♠g3 d3 16 ♞e3 ♖xf3 17 gxf3 ♞e6 18 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 19 ♜xd3 ♜xd3 20 ♜xd3 ♖xe5 21 ♞e4 0-0 with no problems for Black in Shamkovich-Radashkovich, Israel 1974.

b) Unpinning doesn't give anything either due to 13 ♞e3 ♖e6 14 b4 d4 15 cxd4 ♖cxd4 16 ♖e4 ♖d8 17 a3, as in Westerenin-Chekhov, Moscow 1982, and now the follow-up 17...c5 (Korchnoi) is equal.

12...♖e6

This move, stopping White from coming to d4 with the unpinned knight, is perhaps the most logical continuation, but castling is perfectly satisfactory for Black, e.g. 12...0-0 13 ♖d4 ♖xd4 14 cxd4 ♖e6 15 ♖b3 (15 ♞e3! c5! 16 dxc5 ♖xc5 17 ♞g3 ♖e2 18 ♖e1 ♖d4, as in Blokkhuis-COMP Wchess, The Hague 1997, gave a strong initiative for Black, who won easily) 15...a5, as in Gligoric-Miagmasuren, Tel Aviv Olympiad 1964, is given as the standard way to equalise. That game continued 16 ♞e3 f5! 17 exf6 ♜xf6 18 f3 ♖h5 19 a4 bxa4 20 ♜xa4 ♖e8 21 ♖a1 (or 21 ♜xa5 ♜xa5 22 ♖xa5 c5 23 ♖b3 c4 and Black wins back the d-pawn under favourable circumstances with 24...♞b6) 21...a4 and Black was doing well.

13 h3 ♖h5 14 ♖h2 ♖g6 15, ♖b1

Distinctly inferior is 15 ♖xg6 due to 15...fxg6! (f-file) 16 ♖b3 (or more recently 16 ♖df3 0-0 17 ♖e3 ♜f5 18 g4 ♜f7 19 ♖d2 ♖d7 20 ♖ad1 ♖af8, as in Lobzhanidze-Korneev, Minsk 1998, with preference for the second player) 16...g5! 17 ♖e3 0-0 and Black had the better game in Alekhine-Rubinstein, Vilnius 1912.

15...♖d7!?

After 15...♖c5 16 f4 ♖xb1 17 ♜xb1 ♖d3 18 ♞g3 ♖xc1 19 ♜bxc1 0-0, as in Fahrni-

Kostic, Carlsbad 1911, White's aggressive-looking position is not that dangerous with two pairs of minor pieces already exchanged, but he can claim a slight initiative.

16 f4 ♖xb1 17 ♜xb1 g6 18 ♠g4

18 f5 ♠g7 19 f6 ♖c5+ 20 ♖h1 ♖e6 21 ♖b3 ♖b6 22 ♖e3 is suggested by Pedersen as a favourable alternative for White. He has a space advantage but the knight on e6 holds everything together for Black.

18...0-0-0!?

The struggle becomes complex after this, an extremely rare option for the black king in the Open.

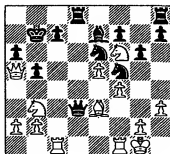
19 ♖b3 d4 20 cxd4

20 ♖h6 dxc3 21 bxc3 ♖f8 22 f5 gxf5 23 ♖xf5 is unclear according to Pedersen.

20...♖cxd4 21 ♖e3 ♖f5 22 ♖c1 ♖d5 23 ♞a5 ♖b7 24 ♖f6!

The point - see the previous note!

24...♖d3



24...♖xf6? allows White's attack to get out of hand with 25 ♖c5+ ♖xc5 26 ♜xc5 ♖d7 27 ♜fc1 ♜c8 28 ♜c6!

25 ♖a7! A surprise, keeping the bishop in the attack. If instead 25 ♖f2 then 25...♖e3 defends painlessly. Now the complications quickly lead to a perpetual check.

25...♖xa7 26 ♜f3 ♖c5+ 27 ♜xc5 ♞b1+ 28 ♖h2 ♖d1 29 ♜xc7+ ♖xc7 30 ♞xc7+ ♖a8 31 ♞c6+ ♖a7 32 ♞c7+ ♖a8 33 ♞c6+ ½-½

Summary

This is perhaps the most difficult chapter for move order complexities and transpositions.

If Black wishes to play for a quick ...d5-d4 the best moment is move 11. Play in Game 29 suggests that the ending that follows is more or less equal, but note that the early simplification offers few winning chances.

Black's most consistent route to equality is 11...♗g4 12 ♖e1 0-0 and 13...♖e8. This is true against either 13 ♖b3 (Game 32) or 13 ♗f1 (Games 34 and 35).

The plan with 12...♗d7 and ...♗d8 doesn't seem to equalise against either 13 ♗f1 (Games 37 and 38) or 13 ♖b3 (Game 36).

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♗f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6
9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♖bd2 ♗c5 11 ♗c2

11...♗g4

11...d4 – Game 29

12 ♖e1 (D)

12 ♗e1 – Game 39

12...0-0

12...♗d7

13 ♖b3 – Game 36

13 ♗f1 ♗d8 14 ♗e3 ♗h5

15 b4 (D) – Game 37

15 ♗f5 – Game 38

13 ♗f1

13 ♖b3

13...♗e4 – Game 31

13...♖e8 – Game 32

13...♖e8

13...d4 – Game 30

13...♗h5 – Game 33

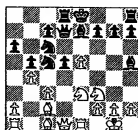
14 h3

14 ♗e3 – Game 34

14...♗h5 15 ♗g3 ♗g6 16 ♗f5 (D) – Game 35



12 ♖e1



15 b4



16 ♗f5

CHAPTER SIX

9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♘bd2: Black avoids the Main Line



The well-researched variations of the previous chapter are not everybody's cup of tea. Some players have sought other ways of developing and ideas without 10...♘c5 are covered here.

Anand's 10...♞d7 (Game 40) hasn't caught on at all, whereas 10...0-0 (Games 41-45) has a rich history but is out of fashion.

After 10...0-0 White can try 11 ♞e2 against which 11...♘xd2 (Game 41) often goes wrong in practical play as White will immediately probe away at Black's rather naked king. Black can get his queenside majority going but it seems slow and ineffective. I prefer 11...♘c5 (Game 42) against which White has to play accurately to obtain anything at all.

The other dangerous 11th move is 11 ♖c2 when Games 44 and 45 offer some ideas as to keep an edge.

Overall, Black's play in Chapter 5 is more popular, which suggests that most top players believe 10...♘c5 to be best, but there is certainly surprise value in trying 10...0-0.

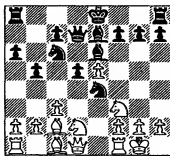
Game 40
J.Polgar-Anand
Munich 1991

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♘f6

5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♘bd2 ♞d7

An experiment of Anand that hasn't caught on. Games 41-45 feature 10...0-0.

11 ♖c2



11...♘xd2

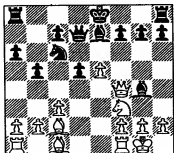
White was much better after 11...♖f5 12 ♘d4 (interesting is the solid continuation 12 ♞e1 ♘c5 13 ♘f1 ♖xc2 14 ♞xc2 0-0 15 ♖e3 ♘e6 16 ♞ad1 f6 17 exf6 ♖xf6 18 ♘g3 ♞ad8 19 ♘e4, as in Zapata-Rodriguez, Bogota 1991, when White has a slight initiative) 12...♖g6 13 a4 0-0 (Krasenkov proposes 13...♘xd2 14 ♖xd2 0-0 as an improvement) 14 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 15 axb5 axb5 16 ♞xa8 ♞xa8 17 ♖xc4 dxc4 18 e6 fxe6 19 ♘xb5, as in Luther-Krasenkov, Asti 1996, because of

problems with the black pawn structure.

12 ♖xd2 ♖g4

After 12...0-0 White keeps the initiative with 13 ♖d3. Typically when the knight on e4 is exchanged for its counterpart on d2, the black position loses its potential dynamic qualities and White often has a safe edge.

13 ♖f4



13...♖xf3?!

Polgar analyses 13...0-0 14 ♖g5 h6 15 ♖h7 ♖fe8 16 h3 and then after either 16...♖e6 or 16...♖e2 the shot 17 ♖f6+! yields a strong attack.

However, less entertaining but much better is 14...♖xg5! 15 ♖xg5 h6! (15...♖ae8?! 16 f3) 16 ♖f4 (16 ♖e3 ♖f5 is equal) 16...♖ae8 17 f3 ♖h5 with a good position. Perhaps White should try 18 ♖g3 ♖xe5 19 ♖xh6 but Black has no problems after 19...♖g6 (Flear).

14 ♖f5

Gaining time.

14...♖d8 15 ♖xf3

15 gxf3 also looks reasonable.

15...♖xe5 16 ♖e2 ♖d6

The continuation 16...♖c6? 17 ♖d1 0-0 18 ♖e4 spells trouble for Black (Polgar).

17 ♖e1 ♖c6 18 ♖g5 ♖f8!

The only hope as others are clearly lacking: 18...f6? 19 ♖h5+ ♖f8 20 ♖e6 ♖c5 21 ♖e3 d4 22 ♖xd4 with a clear advantage (Korchnoi) and 18...g6? 19 ♖ad1 gxf5 20 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 21 ♖xd5 ♖f6 22 ♖xf5 ♖d6 23

♖e5 and White is winning (Polgar).

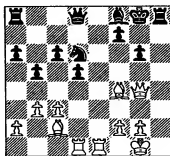
19 ♖e3 g6 20 ♖h6+ ♖g8 21 ♖g4

White has good attacking chances for the pawn. Exactly the type of position to avoid against Judit Polgar!

21...♖f6 22 ♖c2 ♖f8 23 ♖g5 ♖d6 24 ♖f4 ♖d8 25 ♖ad1 ♖a5 26 h4!

Black has long-term problems organising his army, so White has the time to loosen the opposing king's defences.

26...c6 27 h5 ♖c4 28 b3 ♖d6 29 hxg6 hxg6



30 ♖xg6! fxg6 31 ♖e6!

Avoiding 31 ♖xg6+?! ♖g7 32 ♖xd6 (32 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 33 ♖xd6 ♖xc3 is not clear) which is met by 32...♖h6.

31...♖h7

Polgar points out why the other defences fail: 31...♖a7 to 32 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 33 ♖xg6+ ♖g7 34 ♖e8+ and 31...♖e8 to 32 ♖xg6+ ♖g7 33 ♖c6+ ♖f8 34 ♖d3.

32 ♖xd6 ♖g7 33 ♖de1

33 ♖xg6 was simpler.

33...♖h6 34 g3 ♖d7 35 ♖f4 g5 36 ♖xg5 ♖g6 37 ♖f5 ♖xe6 38 ♖xe6+?

The clearest path to victory is 38 ♖xe6 ♖e8 39 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 40 ♖f6 leading to a winning queen ending, whereas the text gives chances for Black to draw by mobilising his queenside majority.

38...♖xe6 39 ♖xe6 ♖c8 40 ♖d2 ♖f7 41 ♖e1 c5 42 ♖f1 c4 43 bxc4 ♖xc4?

43...bxc4 44 ♖b1 d4 would give

reasonable drawing chances by creating a dangerous passed pawn.

44 ♖c1 ♗e6 45 ♗e2 d4 46 cxd4 ♙xd4
47 ♙e3 ♙b2 48 ♞xc4 bxc4 49 ♗d2

The bishop ending with two connected passed pawns seems to be a comfortable win. 49...♙g7 50 ♗c2 ♗d5 51 f3 ♙f6 52 ♙h6 ♙e5 53 g4 ♙d4 54 ♙d2 ♙b6 55 ♙c1 ♙a5 56 a4 ♗e5 57 ♙g5 ♗d5 58 ♙d2 ♙c7 59 ♙c3 ♙f4 60 ♙f6 ♙g3 61 g5 ♙h4 62 ♙d8 ♙f2 63 g6 ♙d4 64 ♙a5 ♗e6 65 ♙c3 1-0

Game 41
Mecking-Korchnoi
Augusta (2nd matchgame) 1974

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♗f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5
♙e6 9 c3 ♙e7 10 ♗bd2 0-0 11 ♗e2

Apart from 11 ♙c2 (Games 43-45) there are also some less common tries here:

a) 11 ♗d4 ♗xd4 12 cxd4 ♗xd2 13 ♙xd2 c5 14 dxc5 ♙xc5 with easy piece play for Black, e.g. 15 ♞c1 ♞c8 16 ♙xc5 ♞xc5 17 ♙b4 ♞c7 18 ♞d4 ♞c1 19 ♙xf8 ♗xf8 ½-½ Keres-Fine, Amsterdam 1938.

b) 11 ♞e1? (not previously considered a dangerous move order, but Anand has introduced a critical idea) 11...♗c5 and now:

b1) 12 ♗d4 ♗xd4 13 cxd4 ♗d3 14 ♞e3 ♗xc1 15 ♞xc1 c5 16 dxc5 ♞c8 17 ♞d3 ♙xc5 and again Black had achieved ...c7-c5 painlessly in Kajumov-Buturin, Primorsko 1989. The further continuation was instructive: 18 ♗e4! dxc4! (a positional queen sacrifice) 19 ♙xd8 ♞fxd8 20 ♗e1 ♙xb3 21 axb3 ♙d4 and Black has equal chances.

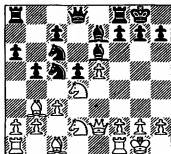
b2) Anand recently came up with 12 ♙c2!? d4 13 ♗b3!? (previously 13 cxd4 ♗xd4 14 ♗xd4 ♞xd4 15 ♗c2 ♞ad8 16 ♗f3 ♞c4, as in Ki.Georgiev-Piket, Biel 1993, was known to be equal) 13...dxc3 14 bxc3 ♞xd1 15 ♞xd1 ♞ad8 16 ♙g5! and White kept an initiative in Anand-Korneev, Villarrobledo 1998.

11...♗c5

11...♗xd2 is inferior, as we shall see in the next main game. Alternatively, 11...♙f5!? 12 ♞d1 ♗c5 13 ♗f1 ♗xb3 14 axb3 ♙e4, as in Visser-Ernst, Groningen 1997, could be met by 15 ♙f4 rather than 15 ♗g3 ♙xf3 16 gxf3?! (16 ♞xf3 is equal) 16...♞d7 17 f4 ♞c6 18 ♙e3 f6 when Black was better.

12 ♗d4

After 12 ♙c2!? Black immediately frees his position with 12...d4!, when after 12 ♞d1 ♞d7 13 ♙c2 f6, as in Vasiukov-Lutikov, Moscow 1982, Black had already equalised.



12...♗xb3

Another idea is to first capture on d4, changing the pawn structure, e.g. 12...♗xd4 13 cxd4 ♗xb3 (13...♗d7 14 f4 f5 15 exf6 ♞xf6 16 f5! ♙f7 17 g4 was already very difficult for Black in Znosko Borovskyy-Euwe, Broadstairs 1921) 14 ♗xb3 ♞c8, as in Botvinnik-Denker, Groningen 1946, when by now playing 15 ♙d2! followed by ♞c1 White stops the counter ...c7-c5 and thus keeps Black tied down to the defence of his weakened queenside.

If 12...♞d7 13 ♙c2 f6 14 b4 ♗a4 (14...♗xd4! 15 cxd4 ♗a4 limits White's advantage) 15 ♗f3 ♗xd4 16 ♗xd4 c5 17 exf6 ♞xf6 18 ♗xe6 ♞xe6 19 ♞d3 ♞g6 20 ♙f4 ♞f8 21 ♞a1 ♞d7 22 ♙g3 ♞f7 23 ♞c5 ♗b6 24 ♞fe1, as in Short-Unzicker, West Germany 1987, White has a clear advantage in view of his good bishops and rooks and

Black's awkwardly placed pieces.

13 ♜2xb3

White should seriously consider 13 ♜xc6 ♜xc1 14 ♚axc1 ♚d7 15 ♜xc7+ ♚xe7 16 f4 f5 17 exf6 ♚xf6 18 ♚e3 ♖f5 19 ♚d4, as in Janosevic-Lukic, Yugoslavia 1955, when he has a nice edge due to his better minor piece and, by following up with b2-b4, a blockade of the pawn majority.

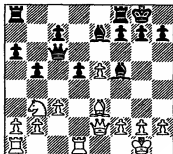
13...♚d7 14 ♜xc6 ♚xd6 15 ♖e3

Again, White is spoilt for choice. 15 f4 ♖f5 16 ♖c3 ♚g6 17 ♚f2 f6 18 e6!, as in Boleslavsky-Keres, USSR Championship 1947, also gives Black some problems.

15...♖f5

After 15...♚c4 16 ♚d2! White obtained an edge in Fischer-Euwe, New York (2nd matchgame) 1957 - but the complete score of this game has been lost! It is astonishing that a matchgame of a former World Champion can be mislaid as recently as the 1950s. This is better than 16 ♚c2 ♚g4 17 ♜d4 ♚fc8 18 f4 c5, as in Stoltz-Szabo, Groningen 1946, when Black has equalised.

16 ♚fd1



16...♚g6!

An improvement on 16...♚fd8 17 f3 ♖f8 18 ♚f2 a5, as in Botvinnik-Euwe, Leningrad 1934, when after 19 ♚ac1 a4 20 ♜c5 White has an advantage despite the opposite-coloured bishops.

17 ♜d4

Not 17 ♚xd5?? as 17...♖e4 wins on the

spot.

17...♖d7 18 b4

On 18 ♜b3 then 18...♚e4 is an awkward pin.

18...♚e4 19 ♖d2

After 19 f4 f6 Black starts to open the position for his bishops.

19...♚xe2 20 ♜xe2

In this typical Open Ruy Lopez ending the bishops compensate for a devalued majority.

20...♚fe8 21 ♖f4 c6 22 ♜d4 a5 23 a3 axb4 24 axb4 ♚a4 25 ♜b3

After 25 ♚xa4 bxa4 26 ♚a1 c5 Black has a useful passed pawn.

25...♚ea8 26 ♖e3 f6 27 ♖d4 fxe5 28 ♖xe5 ♖f5 29 ♚ac1 ♖g5 30 f4 ♖d8 31 ♚d2 ♖e4 32 ♜c5 ♖b6 33 ♖d4 ♖xc5 34 ♖xc5 ♚a2 35 ♚cd1 h5 ½-½

Neither majority looks dangerous with opposite bishops.

This line used to attract many of the world's top players, but Black's prospects of an equal game and active play are worse here than in Chapter 5.

Game 42

Hecht-Langeweg

Hangelo 1968

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♜f6 5 0-0 ♜xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♜bd2 0-0 11 ♚e2 ♜xd2

As we saw in the previous game, 11...♜c5 is promising for White but this proves to be an even more passive try. The exchange ...♜xd2 is tantamount to giving White a free initiative and is rarely the correct approach in the Open.

12 ♖xd2

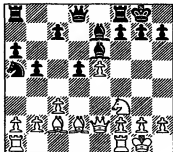
After 12 ♚xd2 ♜a5 13 ♖c2 ♜c4 14 ♚d3 g6 15 ♖h6 ♜xb2! (this cheeky move is playable but dangerous and more double-edged than 15...♚e8 16 ♚d4 f6 17 exf6 ♖xf6 18 ♚f4 c5 19 ♚fe1 with a pleasant edge to White in Scholl-Zuidema, Netherlands 1967)

16 ♖e3 Black has tried two defences:

a) 16...♞c8 17 ♜f4 c5 18 ♘g5! (better than the 18 ♘g5 d4 19 cxd4 cxd4 20 ♙e4, as in Tal-Korchnoi, Riga 1955, because 20...♞c8! is unclear - Van der Tak) 18...♞b6 19 ♞ae1 d4 20 ♘e4 with a strong attack in Armati-Kosnicky, correspondence 1942.

b) 16...♘c4 17 ♜f4 c5!? (the best practical try as after 17...f6 18 ♙xf8 ♜xf8 19 ♘d4 ♜f7 20 exf6 ♙xf6 21 a4 Black had insufficient play for the exchange in Psakhis-Zaitsev, Yerevan 1982) 18 ♙xf8 ♙xf8, as given by Keres. Black may have a playable game here (the white rooks are not as yet that useful) but White is probably favourite.

12...♘a5 13 ♙c2



13...♘c4

The alternatives are as follows:

a) In Vasiukov-Lukic, Reykjavik 1957, Black tried 13...c5 14 ♜d3 g6 15 ♙h6 ♞e8 16 ♞ad1 ♘c4 17 ♙c1 f6 18 exf6 ♙xf6 19 ♞fe1 ♜d6 20 ♙b3, when White had a persistent initiative but no easy breakthrough.

b) 13...♜d7 and now:

b1) 14 ♞ad1 c5 15 ♞fe1 ♘c6 16 ♙c1 ♞fe8 17 ♜d3 g6 18 ♖e3 ♙f8 19 ♜f4 h6 20 ♜h4 ♙g4 21 ♙f4 ♙xf3 22 gxf3 ♙g7 23 ♜g3 ♞ad8 24 h4 with an unclear position in Sznapiak-Lalic, Copenhagen 1989.

b2) Instead 14 ♜d3! g6 15 ♙h6 gives White a dangerous initiative, e.g. 15...♙f5 16 ♜c2 ♞fe8 17 ♘d4 ♙xc2 18 ♙xc2 ♙d6 19 f4 f6 20 ♜d3 fxe5 21 f5 ♙c5+ 22 ♘h1 e4 23

♜g3 ♙d6, as in Keres-Dyckhoff, correspondence 1936, when 24 ♙f4 is best with an advantage, according to Korchnoi, since the game continuation 24 ♜g5 ♞e5 25 ♘c3 ♜f7 26 ♜h4 ♘c4 27 fxe6 ♜xe6 28 ♞h5 29 ♙xg6+ hxg6 30 ♜f6 ♞xh2+ 31 ♘g1 ♞xh6 32 ♜g5 ♘h7 was unclear and eventually led to a draw.

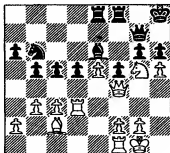
14 ♙c1 ♜d7 15 b3 ♘b6 16 ♜d3 g6 17 ♙h6 ♞f8 18 ♜d2 f5?!

18...c5 is probably better, because the text gives White a static target as Black no longer has the option of opening the centre with ...f7-f6.

19 h4! ♘h8 20 ♞ad1 c5 21 ♜f4 ♙f8 22 ♙xf8 ♞xf8 23 ♘g5 ♞ae8 24 ♞d3

The storm clouds are gathering!

24...♜g7 25 h5 h6



26 hxg6!

Much more dangerous than 26 ♘xe6 ♞xe6 27 hxg6 ♙xg6 28 ♞g3 ♞g5, which is only a little better for White as his opponent is holding the kingside together.

26...hxg6 27 ♜xg5?

This is given as an error in *Informator* 5, with the line 27 ♞h3+ ♘g8 28 ♜xg5 ♜xe5 29 ♞h7 proposed as stronger; indeed 29...♜f6 30 ♜h5! ♞e7 31 g7! seems to do the trick.

27...f4 28 ♞f3 ♘g8 29 ♞xf4 ♞xf4 30 ♜xf4 ♞f8 31 ♜g5 d4 32 cxd4 ♘d5?!

A more robust defence was 32...cxd4 33 f4 ♘d5 34 f5 ♜xe5 35 ♜h5 ♜g7 36 ♜h7+

Wxh7 37 gxh7+ Qxh7 38 fxe6+ Qg7 (Maric).

33 dxc5 Qf4 34 Qd1 Qd5 35 Wh4

35 b4 was more precise.

35...Qxg2 36 Qd8 Qxg6 37 Qxg6 Wxg6

38 Qxf8+ Qxf8 39 Qd8+ Qf7 40 e6+

Black loses back the bishop and the game.

40...Qg7 41 We7+ Qh6 42 Wf8+ Qh5

43 Wh8+ Qg4 44 Qxg2 Qf4+ 45 Qh2

1-0

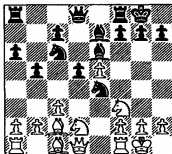
In the end it became rather messy but the early middlegame, and the notes, show that although just about playable, this line gives White dangerous attacking chances. I feel that 11...Qxd2 is too co-operative and is a poor practical choice.

Game 43
Arsenev-Zuhovicky
USSR 1967

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qb5 a6 4 Qa4 Qf6

5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Qb3 d5 8 dxe5

Qe6 9 c3 Qe7 10 Qbd2 0-0 11 Qc2



11...f5

The most interesting as others give White a comfortable game:

a) 11...Qc5 12 Qb3 (12 Qd4!?) is also promising after 12...Qxe5 13 b4 Qa4 14 Wh5 Qg6 15 f4 Qxc3 16 f5 Qxb4 17 fxe6 fxe6 18 Q2f3, as in Ivanovic-Cvetkovic, Yugoslav Championship 1974) 12...Qxb3 13 axb3 Qd7 14 Qd3 g6 15 Qh6 with an edge

for White in the game Am.Rodriguez-Karl, Chiasso 1993.

b) 11...Qxd2 yet again proves tame after 12 Wxd2 f6 13 exf6 Qxf6, as in Yates-Tarrasch, Bad Kissingen 1928, when Korchnoi's 14 Qd5 Qxg5 15 Wxg5 Wxg5 16 Qxg5 Qa5 gives White a pleasant endgame edge due to the bishop pair.

c) Black cannot really support the knight with 11...Qf5 12 Qd4 Qxd4 13 cxd4 c5 (13...f6 proved too loosening in Ivanchuk-Korchnoi, New York rapidplay 1994, due to 14 Qxe4 Qxe4 15 Qxe4 dxe4 16 Wb3+ Qh8 17 Qe3 c6 18 We6 We8 19 Qa1 with big problems in the black camp) 14 Qxe4 Qxe4 15 Qxe4 dxe4 16 d5 Qe8, as in Geller-Korchnoi, Budva 1967, when 17 f4! would have maintained the advantage.

12 exf6

Experience has shown that White has more chances of obtaining something from the opening with 12 Qd4 or 12 Qb3 (see Games 44 and 45 respectively).

12...Qxf6 13 Qb3

The continuation 13 Qg5?! Qg4 14 f3 Qc8 15 Qe1 Qd6 16 We2 Qd7 17 Qb3 Qae8 gave Black superior development in Kotov-Averbakh, USSR 1952. However, a reasonable alternative to the text was 13 Qe1 Qg4 14 Qf1 Qd7 15 Qe3 Qc5 16 Qxg4 Qxg4 17 Qe3 Qxe3 18 fxe3 Qad8 19 e4 d4, as in Godena-Brunner, Novi Sad Olympiad 1990, which was more or less equal.

13...Qg4! 14 Qd3

Korchnoi believes that 14 h3 Qh5 15 g4 can be met by 15...Qxg4 16 hxg4 Qxg4 17 Qd3 Qf5 18 Wxf5 Qxf5 19 Qxf5 with an unclear position. White has plenty of material for the queen but an exposed king.

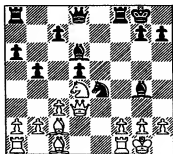
14...Qe4

The most dynamic. Instead a draw was agreed after 14...Qd7 15 Qbd4 Qxd4 16 cxd4 Qxf3 17 Wxf3 g6 18 Qh6 Qf7 19 Qa1 Qg4 20 Wh3 Qf6 21 Qe3 c6 22 Qd1 in Rohde-Korchnoi, Beersheva 1987.

Worse is 14...Qxf3?! which unnecessarily

weakens the light squares. After 15 ♖xf3 ♜d6 16 ♖h3 ♜e5 17 ♘d2 ♘d6 18 ♘f5 ♚c7 19 ♙e6+ ♜h8 20 ♜f1 and White had an edge in Gufeld-Leverett, Carodoza 1998, due to the pair of bishops and some light-square fragility in the black camp. However, another move 14...♘h5, intending ...♘g6, is safe.

15 ♜bd4 ♚xd4 16 ♚xd4 ♘d6



Black's minor pieces are active and given half the opportunity he is poised to pounce at White's king.

17 ♚xb5?

This move, playing for tricks against the exposed d5-pawn, proves to be fraught with danger. Alternatively:

a) 17 ♙b3?! ♜h8 18 h3 ♖h4 19 f4 ♚c5 20 ♜c3 ♜ae8 21 ♚f3 ♘xf3 22 ♖xf3 c6, as in Gipslis-Suetin, Tallinn 1959, favours Black.

b) 17 ♚c6? ♖h4 18 ♖xd5+ ♜h8 19 h3 ♜xf2 20 ♘xe4 ♜xf1+ 21 ♚xf1 ♜f8+ is even winning for the second player.

c) Instead 17 h3 is White's most prudent course, when after 17...♖h4 18 ♚xb5 ♚xf2 19 ♘g5! ♚xd3 20 ♘hx4 axb5 21 ♘xd3 ♘d7 he escaped with equality in Ragozin-Ravinsky, USSR 1947.

The game continuation is an unfortunate move order reversal which allows Black a winning attack starting with...

17...♘h2+! 18 ♜xh2 ♖h4+ 19 ♚g1 ♜f5

Threatening 20...♘h5.

20 ♙b3 ♜h8

The immediate 20...♘h5 fails to 21 ♖xd5+ ♜xd5 22 ♘xd5+ ♜h8 23 ♘xa8.

21 f3

Now, however, 21 ♖xd5 ♜xd5 22 ♘xd5 can be met by 22...♜f8 23 ♘xe4 ♘c2 etc.

21...♘h5! 22 ♜xe4 ♖h2+ 23 ♚f2 ♜f8+ 24 ♘f4

Equally hopeless is 24 ♚e1 ♖h4+ 25 g3 ♜xf1+ 26 ♚xf1 ♖h1+.

24...♖xf4+ 25 ♚e1 ♖h1! 0-1

A nice mating attack which shows the power of Black's active pieces after 13 exf6.

Game 44

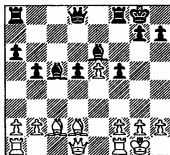
Short-Prasad

Subotica Interzonal 1987

1 e4 e5 2 ♚f3 ♚c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♚f6
5 0-0 ♚xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5
9 ♙e6 9 c3 ♙e7 10 ♚bd2 0-0 11 ♘c2 f5
12 ♚d4 ♚xd4 13 cxd4 ♚xd2

After 13...c5 14 dxc5 ♘xc5?! (14...♚xd2! transposes to our main game) 15 ♚b3 ♙b6 16 ♚d4 White had an optimal position (knight on d4 and play against the weak black pawns on d5 and f5; potential for f2-f3 etc.) and thus a clear advantage in Adams-Demarre, Paris 1989.

14 ♘xd2 c5 15 dxc5 ♘xc5



16 ♙b3

More precise is 16 ♜c1, when play may continue 16...♖b6 (Krasenkov prefers 16...♖d7) 17 b4 ♘d4 (the passive 17...♙e7?)

allows White a blockade by 18 e3 Wd8 19 Wd4, leaving the d5-pawn weak) 18 b3 Nac8 19 Wf3 Wh8 (19...xe5? leads to a disaster after 20 Hce1 Wd6 21 Hxc5 Wxe5 22 He1 Wd6 23 Hxe6) 20 e4 and White kept an edge due to the pressure on d5 and Black's slightly exposed pieces in Gufeld-Prasad, New Delhi 1984.

16...Wb6

Another reasonable move is 16...Wd7, e.g. 17 Hc1 Hfc8 (17...Nac8? allows 18 Hxc5 Hxc5 19 e4 b4 simplifying positively as Black is left with his 'bad bishop', for instance 19...Wc7 20 Wd4! Hc8 21 e5 Wxc5 22 Wxc5 Hxc5 23 Hd1 and White would expect to win with a plan involving f2-f4 and g1-f2-e3-d4 when the d-pawn will fall sooner or later. This nightmare scenario is always a problem for Black when he liberates with ...c7-c5, isolating his own d-pawn, and then plays too passively.) 18 e3 a5 19 a3 b6 20 Hc2 a4 21 e2 d4! and Black had equal play in Ivanchuk-FHjartarson, Tilburg 1989.

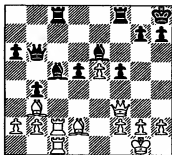
17 Wf3 Hd8

Slightly better was 17...Wh8, not yet committing the rooks. White cannot take on d5 as the bishop hangs on d2.

18 Hac1 b4!

Keeping White cramped. 18...e4? would have allowed 19 e4 followed by installing the bishop on d6, when the d5-pawn would not be long for this world.

19 Hc2 Wh8 20 Hf1 Hc8



21 e4

Unconvincing is 21 e5 e5 22 Wxd5 as Black's position is fine after 22...xf2+.

21...Hfd8 22 h4 h6 23 h5 a5 24 Wh2

Short would like to create chances in the centre and on the kingside, but is constantly restrained by tactical chances on the a7-g1 diagonal. Funnily enough, this move soon allows another tactical point, so perhaps h1 is the right square.

24...Wb5 25 Hd2

After 25 Hd1 Prasad intended 25...We8 eyeing h5.

25...e3! 26 Hxc8

The attack with 26 Wxe3 Hxc1 27 e4 is met by 27...We8, covering the king, as Prasad points out:

26...xf4+ 27 Wxf4 Hxc8

Black has enough counterplay as he has obtained control of the c-file and has ideas such as ...a5-a4, gaining ground on the queenside.

28 g3 a4 29 e4 Hd1 Hc4 30 e2

The ending that follows is about equal, but Black has to be careful as he has the slightly worse pawn structure.

30...xf4 31 e4 Hc4 32 xa4 Hxe5 33 Hd1 e4 34 f3 He7 35 g2 Ha7 36 b3 Ha5 37 f1 g8 38 e2 f8 39 e3 e7 40 d4 d6

Normally once the king is on d4 in such positions, Black would be in trouble, but the semi-open a-file keeps the black position alive.

41 Hc2 e6 42 e2 f7 43 f4 Ha7?

A slip. It was more sensible to 'pass' with 43...e6.

44 e5!

Creating winning chances as White can now use c6.

44...e4 45 Hc6+ e7 46 e6 e3

46...d7 is met by 47 c5 and Black, despite being a pawn up, has several pawns on the verge of falling.

47 Hb6 e4 48 e5 b1 49 xd5 xa2 50 c4

50 ♖c4 followed by ♚xb4 gives White an edge according to Short. In the game, Short tested his less-experienced opponent but Black had sufficient resources to hold on.

50...♗b1 51 ♗xb4 ♗e4 52 ♗c3 ♗d7 53 ♗c4 ♗d6 54 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 55 ♗d4 g5 56 ♗e2 gxf4 57 gxf4 ♗d5 58 b4 ♗e4 59 b5 ♗d5 60 ♗h5 ♗b7 61 ♗c4 ♗d5+ 62 ♗b4 ♗g2 63 ♗a5 ♗c7 64 ♗a6 ♗f1 65 ♗f3 ♗d3 66 ♗a5 ♗e4 67 ♗h5 ♗b7 68 ♗g6 ♗a7 69 b6+ ♗b7 70 ♗b5 ♗d3+ 71 ♗c5 ♗e4 72 ♗h5 ♗b8 73 ♗e8 ♗b7 74 ♗g6 ♗a6

Simpler was 74...♗c2.

75 ♗xf5! ♗xf5 76 ♗c6 ♗e4+ 77 ♗c7 h5 78 f5 h4 79 f6 h3 80 b7 ♗xb7 81 f7 h2 82 f8 ♗f h1 ♗f 83 ♗f6+ ♗c6+ 84 ♗xc6+ ♗xc6 85 ♗xc6 ½-½

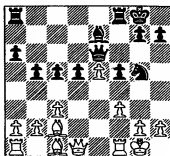
A good practical example with an isolated d-pawn in the Open. White should not be allowed to blockade the d-pawn with a knight, nor to exchange the dark-squared bishops too early. Black must compete for the c-file and space on the queen's wing and generally remain active.

♖xb3 ♖xb3 25 ♗xb3 ♗b8 Black will win back the b2-pawn) 24...♗b8, as in Akopian-Krasenkov, Vilnius 1988.

13...♖xd4 14 ♖xd4

White had nothing special after 14 cxd4 a5 15 f3 a4 16 fxe4 axb3 17 ♗xb3 fxe4 18 ♗e3 ♗xf1+ 19 ♗xf1 ♗f8 20 ♗e2 h6 in Grünfeld-Tal, Riga Interzonal 1979.

14...c5 15 ♖xe6 ♗xe6 16 f3 ♖g5



17 a4

White can force opposite-coloured bishops by 17 ♗xg5 but it's far from drawish. In fact, White keeps some pressure, e.g. 17...♗xg5 18 f4 ♗e7 (the idea 18...♗d8 19 a4 c4 20 axb5 ♗b6+ 21 ♗h1 axb5 is refuted by Vasiukov's 22 ♗xf5!) 19 ♗f3 c4 20 ♗fd1 ♗ad8 21 ♗d2 ♗c5+ 22 ♗f1! (the point is that 22 ♗h1 d4 23 ♗ad1 d3 24 ♗xd3 ♗xd3 25 ♗xd3 cxd3 26 ♗b3 ♗xb3 27 axb3 ♗d8 wins for Black as the white king cannot blockade the d-pawn - Vasiukov) 22...♗d7 23 ♗ad1 ♗fd8 24 b3 g6 25 h3 h5 26 g3 ♗g7, as in Korsunsky-Chekhov, USSR 1979, when White has chances for an attack by continuing with 27 ♗g2 followed by g3-g4.

17...g6 18 ♗e2

This offers nothing. A better try is 18 ♗xg5 ♗xg5 19 f4 ♗e7 20 axb5 (or 20 ♗f3 b4!, as in Balashov-Korchnoi, West Germany 1980) 20...axb5 21 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 22 g4, but Black held on to equalise in Hübner-Korchnoi, Germany 1989, with 22...fxg4 23 f5 gxf5 24 ♗xf5 ♗a6 25 ♗h1 ♗h8 26 ♗xg4

Game 45

Nunn-Korchnoi

Cologne (rapidplay) 1989

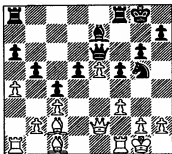
1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♖bd2 0-0 11 ♗c2 f5 12 ♖b3 ♗d7 13 ♖fd4

Directly preparing f2-f3. If White delays this idea then Black should seek play by expanding on the queenside, e.g. 13 ♗e1 a5! (13...♖d8, intending ...c7-c5 is not bad either, but 13...♗ad8 14 ♗e2 ♗fe8 15 ♖fd4 ♖xd4 16 ♖xd4 c5 17 ♖xe6 ♗xe6 18 f3 ♖g5 19 a4 was too routine in Nunn-Wedberg, Novi Sad Olympiad 1990; compared to the main game White is better organised) 14 ♗d3 ♗ab8 15 ♗e2 a4 16 ♖bd4 ♖xd4 17 ♖xd4 c6 18 f3 ♖c5 19 ♗c2 b4! 20 ♗d2 b3 21 axb3 axb3 22 ♗d1 ♗a8! 23 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 24 ♗e3 (after 24

♙a1+ 27 ♖g2 ♖g8.

Another improvement on the game is 18 ♖h1! ♖h8 19 ♖e2 c4 20 ♖f2 ♙ad8 21 axb5 axb5 22 ♖e3 ♙a8 23 ♖d2, when White had made more progress than usual in Milos-Sorin, Villa Gesell 1996. However, even after losing time Black still drew without any great difficulty.

18...c4



White was on top after 18...♖c6?! 19 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 20 f4 ♖e7 21 g4 b4 22 ♙ad1 in A.Rodriguez-Passerotti, Malta Olympiad 1980.

19 ♙e1

Compare the continuation after 19 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 20 f4 ♖e7 21 axb5 axb5 22 ♙xa8 ♙xa8 23 g4, as in Rodriguez-Sorin, Pan American Team Championship 1995, with Hübner-Korchnoi above. Here Black continued with 23...♖h8 and held comfortably after 24 gx5 gx5 25 ♖h1 ♙g8 26 ♖h5 ♖g6.

19...♖b6+ 20 ♖h1 ♖e6

Once Black has established a knight on this excellent blockading square, it is he who can start to look for an initiative.

21 ♙d1 ♙d8 22 axb5 axb5 23 ♖e3 d4

The opposite-coloured bishops are not a problem for Black. He has a promising queenside majority and White's bishop has no useful role.

24 cxd4 ♖xd4 25 ♖xd4 ♙xd4 26 b3

26 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 leaves White worrying

about b2.

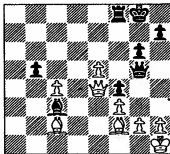
26...f4 27 ♖g1 ♖d8 28 bxc4

Desperately trying to activate his position. The alternative was to go passive after 28 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 29 ♙d1, but this is met by the annoying 29...♖c3.

28...♙d2 29 ♖e4 ♖b4

Preparing to attack g2 with his queen.

30 ♙f1 ♖g5 31 ♙f2 ♙xf2 32 ♖xf2 ♖c3



33 ♖d5+?!

33 e6 would be met by 33...b4 with complications, when the extra exchange may not yet be a decisive factor.

33...♖g7 34 e6?!

The exchange of queens leaves White in great difficulties; Black can then use his king actively whereas the white monarch is out of play.

34...♖xd5 35 cxd5 ♖f6 36 g3 ♙a8 37 ♖e4

Instead, 37 gxf4 loses to 37...♙a1+! 38 ♖g2 ♙a2.

37...♙a1+ 38 ♖g2 ♙a2 39 ♖f1 fxg3 40 hxg3 ♖b4

Not 40...b4?! 41 ♖c5 b3? 42 e7 and now who is winning?

41 ♖d4+ ♖e7 42 g4 ♖d6 43 ♖e1 b4 44 ♖d1 b3 45 g5 ♖b4 46 ♖f6+ ♖f8 47 ♖e5 ♙g2 48 d6 and 0-1

The ending after the continuation 48...♙d2+ (48...b2 49 e7+ wins for White) 49 ♖c1 b2+ 50 ♖xb2 ♙xd6 51 ♖c2 ♙xe6 should be won for Black.

Summary

There is some merit in trying to vary from standard play as early as move ten. White can probably squeeze out a slight edge in Games 41 and Games 44 and 45, if he remembers the theory. However, Games 40 and 42 are too easy for White and should be avoided by the second player.

In conclusion, 10...0-0 is not bad but it is less precise and much less common than 10...Qc5.

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qb5 a6 4 Qa4 Qf6 5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Qb3 d5 8 dxe5 Qe6 9 c3 Qe7 10 Qbd2

10...0-0

10...Wd7 (D) - Game 40

11 Qc2

11 We2

11...Qc5 (D) - Game 41

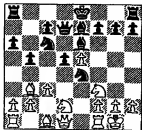
11...Qxd2 - Game 42

11...f5 12 Qb3

12 exf6 - Game 43

12 Qd4 - Game 44

12...Wd7 (D) - Game 45



10...Wd7



11...Qc5



12...Wd7

CHAPTER SEVEN

9 c3 ♗e7:

White avoids the Main Line



1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗e4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♗e7

In this position White generally plays 10 ♖bd2 (Chapters 5 and 6) or occasionally 10 ♗c3 (Chapter 8). Here we examine other lines in which these two moves are omitted or significantly delayed.

In Game 46 Karpov employs 10 ♗c2 ♖c5 11 h3 investing a tempo to stop ...♗g4, whereas in Game 47 White allows the pin with 11 ♗e1.

Games 48 and 49 involve the plan of c2-c3, ♗e2 and ♗d1 which sometimes arises via 9 ♗e2. In Chapter 9 the similar plan of ♗e2, ♗d1 and c2-c4 will be examined.

In Game 50 Hübner tries 10 ♗e1 and 11 ♖d4 and Game 51 takes a close look at 10 a4, a favourite of Alekhine.

The games and notes here are less well known than those in some of the other chapters, and some of these lines are really quite obscure. I suggest that the reader concentrate on development plans and general principles rather than memorising various series of archaic moves parrot-fashion. It will pay to be aware of transpositional ideas and pay particular attention to comparisons with play in the more modern variations.

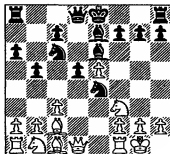
Game 46

Karpov-Korchnoi

Baguio City (24th matchgame) 1978

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♗c2

Not yet a divergence from Chapter 5 as White could meet 10...♖c5 with 11 ♖bd2 transposing. Here we deal with ideas where White delays or avoids the standard knight development.



10...♖c5

A reasonable alternative is 10...♗g4 11 h3 ♗xf3 (11...♗h5 is well met by 12 ♗b3!) 12 gxf3 ♖c5 13 f4 ♗d7 (13...0-0! 14 b4 ♖a4 15

$\mathbb{N}e1$ gave White good attacking chances in Euwe-Cortlever, Amsterdam 1945) 14 $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{N}d8$ 15 $\mathbb{N}d1$ (J.Polgar prefers White after a different move order: 15 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0-0 16 $\mathbb{N}d1$) 15...f5 16 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{W}c6$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ 0-0 18 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ J.Polgar-Hübner, Munich 1991, when Black should continue 18... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 19 $\mathbb{W}g2$ $\mathbb{N}f7$ 20 f3 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ with unclear play (J.Polgar).

Also playable is 10...0-0 11 $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 12 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d2$ f6 14 exf6 (Krasenkov prefers 14 b4, when White had an edge after 14... $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2f3$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ c5 17 exf6 $\mathbb{N}xf6$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{W}xc6$ 19 $\mathbb{W}d3$ $\mathbb{N}g6$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ in Short-Unzicker, West Germany 1987) 14... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 16 $\mathbb{W}d3$ g6 17 $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 18 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}xg5!$ (but not 19... $\mathbb{N}ae8?$ 20 $\mathbb{Q}xh7!$ $\mathbb{Q}xh7$ 21 f4 with a vicious attack in Kouranen-Sorensen, correspondence 1978) 20 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ when White has a small edge due to the bishop pair.

11 h3

11 $\mathbb{N}e1$ is considered (by transposition) in the next main game.

The continuation 11 $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 12 h3 $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}bd2$ can be compared to Chapter 5, except that White's bishop is on g3 or h4. Then Perenyi-Karsa, Zalakaros 1988, led to interesting play: 13... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 15 $\mathbb{W}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 16 $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 17 $\mathbb{N}d1$ 0-0 18 $\mathbb{Q}h4$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 19 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ $\mathbb{N}fe8$.

11 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ is suggested by various authors, without much analysis. In fact, the idea of quickly pushing f2-f4 (whether or not the pawn is taken) is fairly dangerous in a number of other variations of the Open, so why not here? 11... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 12 f4 (Krasenkov suggests 12 $\mathbb{W}h5$ and only then f2-f4) 12... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 13 $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$ is unclear; Black has a loose-looking position but an extra pawn.

11...0-0 12 $\mathbb{N}e1$

Instead 12 $\mathbb{W}e2$ d4 13 cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 14 $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 15 $\mathbb{N}d1$ $\mathbb{W}c4$ 16 $\mathbb{W}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ was equal in Palosh-Lukacs, Tuzla 1981.

12... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 13 $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Now White is again ready for the f-pawn push, but without sacrificing the e-pawn.

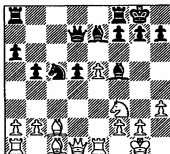
13... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 14 cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 15 $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Keene prefers 15 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ c5 16 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}e3$, intending 18 $\mathbb{Q}d4$.

15...c5

Black does best to open the centre even at the risk of being stuck with an isolated pawn. It's the only way of getting his pieces active.

16 dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 17 $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$



18 $\mathbb{Q}e3$

White clearly shouldn't grab the pawn (due to 18 $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{W}xf5$ 19 $\mathbb{W}xd5$ $\mathbb{N}fd8$ 20 $\mathbb{W}c6$ $\mathbb{N}ac8$ 21 $\mathbb{W}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}d3$ with excellent play) but Filip instead suggests 19 $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 20 $\mathbb{W}f3$ with an edge for White.

18... $\mathbb{N}ac8$ 19 $\mathbb{N}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ 20 $\mathbb{N}xc2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 21 $\mathbb{N}d2$

21 $\mathbb{N}e2$ is suggested by Tal who then prefers White; unlike in the game Black cannot take control of the c-file.

21... $\mathbb{N}fd8$ 22 $\mathbb{W}b3$ $\mathbb{N}c4$ 23 $\mathbb{N}ed1$ $\mathbb{W}b7$

Black has good active piece play and the d-pawn is hard to pressurise.

24 a3 g6

24...h6 with the idea of ... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ was also possible.

25 $\mathbb{W}a2$ a5 26 b3 $\mathbb{N}c3$ 27 a4 bxa4

27...b4 may have been a better continuation, e.g. 28 $\mathbb{Q}d4?$ $\mathbb{N}xf3!$ 29 gxf3 $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 30 $\mathbb{Q}e3$ d4 and the white queen is too far away to save his king.

28 bxa4 $\mathbb{N}c4$ 29 $\mathbb{N}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 30 $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{N}xa4$

It was better to keep the tension with 30... $\mathbb{Q}b4$. The text over-simplifies and a draw

becomes likely.

31 ♖h6+ ♜g8 32 ♠xd5 ♠xd5 33 ♜xd5
 ♜xd5 34 ♠xd5 ♖f8 35 ♖xf8 ♜xf8 36 g3
 ♜e7 37 ♠b5 ♚c7 38 ♠c5 ♚e6 39 ♠b5
 ♚d8 40 ♜g2 h6 41 ♚d2 ♠a1 42 ♚c4
 ♚c6 43 ♠c5 ♜d7 44 ♚b6+ ♜c7 45 ♚c8
 ♜xc8 ½-½

Don't forget that in such positions the isolated d-pawn is also a passed pawn.

Game 47
Beliavsky-Dorfman
USSR Ch., Tbilisi 1978

1 e4 e5 2 ♚f3 ♚c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♚f6
 5 0-0 ♚xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
 ♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♖c2 ♚c5 11 ♠e1 ♖g4

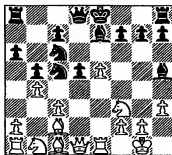
The actual move order was 9...♚c5 10
 ♖c2 ♖g4 11 ♠e1 ♖e7.

12 h3

Here the natural 12 ♚bd2 leads back to
 Chapter 5.

After 12 ♖e3 ♚e6 13 ♖b3 ♚xe5 14
 ♜xd5? ♜xd5 15 ♖xd5 ♖xf3 16 ♖xf3
 ♚xf3+ 17 gxf3 f5! Black had a clear endgame
 edge in Tseschkovsky-Tal, USSR Championship,
 Tbilisi 1978.

12...♖h5 13 b4



A novelty at the time. However, the idea
 of hitting the knight with this push is known
 from a number of Open variations; Black is
 forced to immediately make a decision (he
 might otherwise like to keep his options

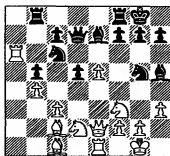
open) and White prepares a2-a4. The pawn
 on b5 can no longer advance and may
 become a static target.

The downside is that the structure c3 and
 b4 may become weak if White loses the
 initiative.

13...♚e6 14 a4 ♠b8 15 axb5 axb5 16
 ♚bd2

It's a moot point whether 16 ♠a6 helps
 White or simply invites Black to make a
 useful developing move, e.g. 16...♜d7 17
 ♚a3 (or 17 ♚bd2 0-0 18 ♚f1 ♠a8 19 ♠xa8
 ♠xa8 20 ♖d3 ♠b8 21 ♚g3 ♖g6 22 ♚f5 d4!
 [normal counterplay with this set-up] 23
 ♚xe7+ ♜xe7 24 ♖xg6 hxg6 25 cxd4 ♠d8 26
 d5 ♜d7, when Black had equalised in Short-
 Yusupov, Reykjavik 1990) 17...0-0 (after
 17...♚cd8 White was able to re-deploy his
 minor pieces favourably with 18 ♖f5 0-0 19
 ♚c2 ♖g6 20 ♚fd4 ♠e8 in Kupreichik-Haba,
 Prague 1990, when White can keep up the
 pressure with 21 g4) 18 ♚xb5 ♚xb4! (not of
 course 18...♠xb5? 19 ♜d3 and Black loses
 material) with equal chances according to
 Haba.

16...♚g5 17 ♠a6 ♜d7 18 ♜e2 0-0



Theory gives this position as equal, but the
 fight that follows contains a number of
 interesting ideas and is worth following more
 closely.

19 ♖d3 ♚d8 20 ♜e3 ♚de6 21 ♚d4
 ♚xd4 22 cxd4

White has unpinned and is ready to push

with f2-f4-f5 and g2-g4. Black has to claim some space on the kingside as a first priority.
22...f5! 23 e6

23 exf6? xf6 opens the position for Black who threatens ...e8 etc.

23...c8 24 c6 c6 25 f3 g5

The complications that follow seem to favour Black as White's 'centralised' pieces are getting in each other's way.

26 e2 h4 27 f1

Belavsky offers the exchange to liberate his position, but Dorfman prefers to keep the initiative by exchanging White's annoying rook on c6 which at present protects the e-pawn.

27...b6!

A messy alternative is 27...e1 28 xc1 d6 29 e5 or 29 f4!

Equally murky would be 27...f2+ 28 xf2! f2 29 f2, intending f4, when Black has a material advantage but his remaining pieces aren't working together.

28 xb6 cxb6 29 e7 e8

Black seems to be on top after 29...e8.

30 g4!

Creating havoc!

30...g6 31 fe4 fe4 32 xb5 h4

White decides to again give up the rook on e1 as Black threatens to come into f2.

33 e3 e1 34 xe1 h5 35 c1 d8!

The right decision as White's kingside is looking shaky and Black can cause more problems with queens on.

36 g5 d6 37 c6 xb4 38 xd5+ f7 39 e5 e4 40 e4+ xc4 41 f4?

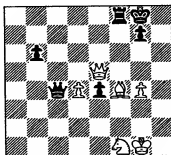
A mistake on the 41st move! Dorfman considers 41 e3 to be equal, when presumably Black has to take the perpetual.

41...hxg4 42 hxg4

see following diagram

42...e2? ½-½

With the time-trouble over, now it's White who will take a perpetual, but with his last move Black misses his chance!



Dorfman suggests instead 42...f1! when White has to go into a dubious ending with 43 f5 xf5 44 gx5 xf5 45 e5 b5 46 g3 g5 47 f2 b4 which he judges as winning for Black.

The opening here looks satisfactory for Black, so White does best to include the flexible Qbd2 in his plans, see Chapters 5 and 6.

Game 48

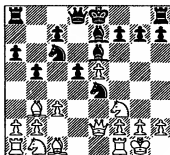
Short-Timman

El Escorial (6th matchgame) 1993

1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 b5 a6 4 e4 f6
5 0-0 c4 6 d4 b5 7 b3 d5 8 dx6
e6 9 c3

The actual move order of the game was 9 c2 e7 10 d1 0-0 11 c3.

9...e7 10 e2



10...0-0

With this move order I quite like 10...♟c5! as I don't believe that White can obtain anything after 11 ♟c2 d4! 12 ♞d1 (12 ♟e4 ♟xe4 13 ♞xe4 ♞d5 is fine for Black) 12...♟c4 13 ♞e1 d3 14 ♟a3 (14 b3? ♞c8 wins immediately for Black, as in Peters-Van Kempen, correspondence 1985) 14...♞c8 15 ♟b1 ♟d5! (an improvement on Szabo-Euwe, Amsterdam 1939, which continued 15...♞f5 16 ♟d4 ♟xd4 17 cxd4 ♟e6 18 ♟xc4 bxc4 19 ♞c3 and Black was in trouble as 19...♞g4 is met by 20 ♞xd3!) 16 ♟xd3 ♟xf3 17 gxf3 ♟xd3 18 ♞xd3 ♞f5, when Black has the better ending after 19 ♞e4 (or 19 ♞e3?! ♟c5 with an advantage - Euwe) 19...♞xe4 20 fxe4 ♟xa3 21 bxa3 ♟xe5 22 ♞d5 ♟c4 23 ♟f4 c6 24 ♞c5 ♞c8 according to Korchnoi.

11 ♞d1

Both 11 ♟c2 and 11 ♟b2 are reasonable alternatives here.

11...♟c5

11...♞d7 is considered in the next main game, while the immediate 11...f5! is interesting, when 12 exf6 ♟xf6 13 ♟c3 is given as unclear by Kurajica. Note that 13 ♞xe4? dxe4 14 ♟xe6+ ♟h8 15 ♞xd8 ♞axd8 16 ♟fd2 leaves White too tangled up after 16...♟g5 and 13 ♞d3 is no good because of 13...♟c5.

12 ♟c2 ♟g4?!

Although this 'double-pin' seems natural it was previously untried at Grandmaster level.

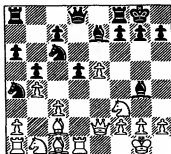
The alternative plan 12...♞d7 followed by ...♞d8 and then ...♟g4 or ...♟f5 is possible, but generally this is employed without immediate castling, as can be seen in the next main game.

13 b4!

The later try 13 ♟c3 ♞e8 14 h3 ♟e6!? 15 ♟bd2 ♟d7 16 ♟f4 f6 proved satisfactory for Black in Peptan-Zso.Polgar, Moscow 1994.

13...♟a4

The d5-pawn is insufficiently defended after 13...♟c6? 14 ♟b3.



14 ♟f4

The d5-pawn is exposed but immediate attempts at refutation don't work, as analysed by Speelman:

a) 14 c4? is clearly bad after 14...♟b4 15 ♟xa4 bxa4 16 a3 ♟c6 17 cxd5 ♟xe5! 18 ♞xe5 ♟xf3 19 gxf3 ♟f6.

b) 14 ♞d3?! doesn't in fact win a pawn due to 14...g6 15 ♞xd5 ♞xd5 16 ♞xd5 ♟xf3 17 gxf3 ♟b6 18 ♞d1 ♟xe5.

c) 14 ♟b3 can be safely met by 14...♟b6.

d) 14 ♟xa4 'weakens' Black's structure, but the e5-pawn and the c3-b4 chain are also fairly weak and a source of counterplay for the second player.

14...♞d7

With the text move Black prepares to offer the d-pawn and in compensation he obtains rapid mobilisation, a theme common in the Open. Instead, 14...♟b6 would be met by 15 a4 and the rook comes into play.

15 ♞d3

15 c4! is critical, when 15...♟xb4 16 ♟xa4 bxa4 17 a3 makes more sense now as the e5-pawn is better protected. Speelman then continues with 17...♞f5! 18 ♟g3 ♟c2 19 ♞a2 ♟xf3 20 ♞xf3 (20 gxf3!? ♟d4 21 ♞xd4 ♞xb1+ 22 ♞d1 ♞b3 23 cxd5 ♟xa3 looks somewhat better for White) 20...♟d4 21 ♞xf5 ♟xf5 22 cxd5 without giving a conclusion. After the further 22...♞ab8 23 ♟f4 g5 24 ♟d2 ♞b3 I think Black is doing okay; he is more active despite an ugly pawn

structure.

15...g6 16 ♖xd5 ♜xd5 17 ♜xd5 ♚b6



18 ♞d1?

Short should have played 18 ♞d2! according to Speelman, who continues 18...♚c4! (18...♞ad8 19 ♖e4! and the knight has no good squares) 19 ♞e2 ♖xf3 20 gxf3 a5 (20...♞ad8!? 21 ♖h6 ♞fe8 22 f4 ♞d5 23 ♖g2 ♚d8 is also a bit fishy for Black – Flear) 21 ♖e4 ♞a6 22 a4! (otherwise Black has good positional compensation) 22...axb4 23 ♖xc6 ♞xc6 24 axb5 ♞c5 (or 24...♞b6 25 ♞e4 ♚a3 and now 26 cxb4) 25 cxb4 ♞xb5 26 ♚c3! ♞b7 and White has liberated his position and maintained an extra pawn (after 26...♞xb4? then 27 ♚d5).

18...♞ad8 19 ♞e1

Now that 19 ♖e4 isn't playable (unlike in the previous note, here the rook on d1 would be en prise) White must cede ground on the d-file and ...♚d5 becomes a useful option. Black has excellent compensation and it is White who has the problems. One small imprecision and the game has turned.

19...♚d5 20 ♖h6

After 20 ♖g3 ♖xf3 21 gxf3 ♖g5 Black starts to control too many important squares. 20...♞fe8 21 a4

Speelman considers 21 ♚bd2 ♚xc3 22 a3 (with an edge to Black) to be a lesser evil.

21...♖xf3 22 gxf3 ♖f8 23 ♖xf8 ♖xf8 24 e6!

Otherwise Black just picks up the e-pawn,

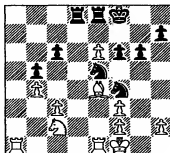
keeping the better structure and development. This makes a fight of it.

24...f6?!

Simpler was 24...♞xe6 25 ♞xe6 fxe6 26 axb5 axb5 27 ♖e4 (27 ♞a6? ♚dxb4!) 27...♚e5 with an advantage according to Speelman, with which one has to agree. One possible continuation is 28 ♖xd5 ♞xd5 29 ♖g2 ♞d1 30 ♞a8+ ♖e7 31 ♚a3 ♚d3 32 ♚xb5 ♚f4+ 33 ♖g3 g5 with a crushing attack. Understandably Timman wanted to keep his structure intact but now his opponent wriggles out.

25 axb5 axb5 26 ♖f1 ♚e5 27 ♖e4 ♚f4

Perhaps 27...f5 28 ♖xd5 ♞xd5 29 ♖g2 ♚d3 30 ♞c3 ♞xe6 31 ♞xe6 ♚f4+ 32 ♖g3 ♚xc6 was a simpler way to keep an edge. 28 ♚a3 c6 29 ♚c2



29...♚e6

Perhaps Timman intended 29...f5 but only now saw 30 ♚d4! fxe4 31 ♞xe4 ♚ed3 (31...♚fd3 32 f4) 32 e7+ ♞xe7 33 ♞xe7 ♞xd4 (33...♖xe7 34 ♚xc6+ ♖e8 35 ♚xd8 ♖xd8 36 ♞a5) 34 ♞aa7 with sufficient counterplay (Speelman).

30 ♞a6 ♞d6 31 ♚d4!

White is over the worse and has good drawing chances.

31...♚xd4 32 cxd4 ♞xd4 33 ♖xc6 ♚xc6 34 ♞xe8+ ♖xe8 35 ♞xc6 ♖e7 36 ♞c7+ ♖e6 37 ♞xh7 ♞xb4 38 ♞b7 g5 39 ♞b6+ ♖e5 40 f4+ gxf4 41 ♖g2 ♞b3 42 h3 ♖f5 43 ♞c6 ♖g5 44 ♞c5+ f5 45 ♞d5

♖b2 46 ♜f3 ♖b3+ 47 ♜g2 b4 48 ♖b5
 ♜g6 49 ♖b6+ ♜h5 50 ♖b8 ♜h4 51 ♖h8+
 ♜g5 52 h4+ ♜g6 53 ♖g8+ ♜f7 ½-½

Game 49

Apicella-Flear

Cappelle la Grande 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♘f6
 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
 ♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♖e2 0-0 11 ♖d1 ♖d7
 12 ♖e3 f5 13 exf6

Alternatively, 13 ♘bd2 ♘a5 (or 13...♖f7!
 – Korchnoi) 14 ♘d4 c5 15 ♘xe6 ♖xe6 16
 f4, as in Kurajica-Diesen, Osijek 1978, was a
 little better for White, but Black is equal after
 14...♖fd8 according to Filip.

13...♖xf6

Apicella criticised this move, preferring
 13...♖xf6 with only a slight edge, but he had
 misjudged the position, as we shall see in the
 next note.

14 ♖c2?!

Apicella judges the position after 14 ♖d3
 as giving White a clear advantage, but Black
 is actually doing fine after 14...♖ad8 15 ♖xe4
 (15 a4 ♘a5 looks okay to me) 15...dxe4 16
 ♖xd7 ♖xb3 17 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 and after either
 knight goes to d2 Black plays 18...♖d5 with
 at least equality.

14 ♘bd2 has been played a couple of
 times, e.g. 14...♘xd2 (14...♘d6)! is more
 ambitious, as in Augustin-Kristinsson,
 Lugano 1968) 15 ♖xd2 ♘e7 16 ♖c5 c6 was
 a little passive but Black held on in A.Ivanov-
 Wedberg, New York 1992.

14...♖f7 15 ♘bd2 ♘d6!

The exchange of knights looked only
 about equal to me, so I decided to play for
 more.

16 ♘g5 ♖xg5 17 ♖xg5 d4!?

17...♖ae8 also seems good but I couldn't
 resist the text.

18 ♘e4 ♖ae8 19 ♘xd6 cxd6 20 ♖d2
 dxc3

Also possible is 20...♖c4 21 ♖c1 ♖xe1+

22 ♖xe1 d3 23 ♖b1 ♘e5 (23...h6!? – Flear)
 24 f4 ♖a7+ 25 ♜h1 ♘g4 26 h3, which is
 given by Apicella as unclear.

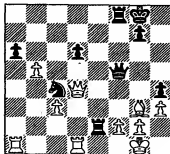
21 bxc3 ♘e5 22 ♖h4 ♘c4 23 ♖d4 ♖f5
 24 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 25 ♖g3 ♖e2 26 h3?

26 a4! was suggested by Apicella as the
 way to keep the balance. The move order in
 the game has a big hole in it

26...h5! 27 a4?

27 h4 was the only move.

27...h4 28 axb5



28...axb5?!

My hand automatically recaptured on b5,
 after which the tussle is no longer clear.
 Instead 28...♖e4 simply wins a piece!

29 ♖a7 ♖g6 30 ♖d5+ ♜h7 31 ♖d4!?

Suddenly it's the black king which is in
 danger. Naturally, 31 ♖xh4 was possible but
 the fight is now all about the initiative.

31...♖e1+

After 31...♖b1+ 32 ♜h2 hxg3+ I couldn't
 find anything convincing against 33 ♖xg3.

32 ♜h2 hxg3+ 33 fxg3 ♖f5 34 ♖h4+
 ♜g6 35 ♖b7!

35 ♖g4+?? fails to 35...♖xg4 36 hxg4
 ♖h8+.

35...♖g8 36 ♖g4+ ♜h6

Unfortunately 36...♖xg4 is refuted by 37
 ♖f7+ ♜g5 38 ♖xg8.

37 ♖h4+ ♜g6 38 ♖g4+ ♜h6 39 ♖xg7
 ♖h8?

39...♘c3! would have drawn after 40
 ♖h7+ ♜g6 41 ♖g7+ ♜h6 etc.

40 ♚f7 ♜g6 41 ♜f3!

Now that the time control had been reached, I realised that there was no defence.

41...♟e3

Too late.

42 ♜f4+ ♜g5 43 ♜xd6+ 1-0

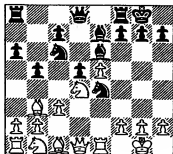
An error-strewn game but a great fight. This typifies my battles against Apicella; I almost always get a good opening but when he wakes up, he turns the game and I've never beaten him (and I've lost quite a few!).

Game 50
Hübner-Piket
Dortmund 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♟c6 3 ♟b5 a6 4 ♟a4 ♟f6
5 0-0 ♟xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♟b3 d5 8 dxe5
♟e6 9 c3 ♟e7 10 ♟e1 0-0

Objectively best is 10...♟c5! 11 ♟c2 ♟g4 with a fully playable game, as we saw in Game 47.

11 ♟d4



11...♟xd4

Certainly not 11...♜d7?, when 12 ♟xe6 wins, as in Tarrasch-Zukertort, Frankfurt 1887.

However there is a wild alternative in 11...♟xe5!, taking the bull by the horns! The variation that follows is great for those that like to indulge in speculative complications, whereas the text move is for the more sober!

After 11...♟xe5! play follows 12 f3 ♟d6

13 fxe4 (13 ♟f4 is nothing special: 13...♟c4! 14 ♟xd6 ♟exd6 15 ♚xe6 fxe6 16 ♟xe6 ♜f6 17 ♟xf8 ♚xf8 18 ♜xd5+ ♟h8 19 ♟d2 ♟xb2 with equality according to Korchnoi) 13...♟g4 (13...♜h4!?) 14 ♜d2 (or 14 ♜c2 c5 15 ♟xd5 cxd4 16 ♟xa8 ♜h4 17 ♚f1 d3 18 ♜f2 ♜xf2+ 19 ♚xf2 ♚xa8, as in Teichmann-John, Wroclaw match 1913, with a complex position which is judged about equal by various commentators) 14...♜h4 15 g3 (or 15 h3 c5 16 ♜f2 ♜h5 17 ♚e3 dxe4 18 hxg4 ♟xg4 19 ♚h3 ♜xh3 20 ♜xf7+ ♚xf7 21 ♟xf7+ ♟xf7 22 gxh3 cxd4 23 hxg4 ♟c5 with another unclear position from the Teichmann-John, Wroclaw match 1913) 15...♜h5 16 ♜g5 ♜h3 17 ♜h4 (not 17 ♟d2 ♟d3 18 ♚f1 ♟xg3 19 hxg3 ♜xg3+ 20 ♟h1 h6 21 ♜xd5 ♟h3 and Black wins - Pliester) 17...♜xh4 18 gxh4 c5 19 ♟f5 ♟xf5 20 exf5 ♟f3+ 21 ♟f2 ♟xe1 22 ♟xe1 c4 23 ♟c2 ♟xh2 with an unclear position (Pliester).

12 cxd4 h6

Or 12...♟b4 13 ♚e2 ♜h4 14 a3 ♟a5 15 ♟c2 ♟b6 16 f3 ♟g5 17 ♟c3 f6 18 ♜d2 ♚ae8 19 exf6 gxf6 20 ♟c3, when White had the better pawn structure in Engels-Bogoljubov, Stuttgart 1939.

13 f3 ♟g5 14 ♟c3

14 ♟e3 ♟f5 15 ♟c3 c6 16 ♚c1 ♟h7, intending ...♟e6, is given by Hübner as unclear.

14...c5 15 f4 cxd4 16 ♟e2!

Better than 16 ♜xd4 ♚c8 17 ♜d1 d4! and Black fights back.

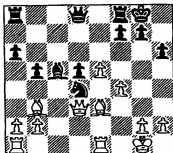
16...d3

The line 16...♟e4?! 17 ♟xd4 ♟c5 18 ♟c3 just gives White what he wants: a strong square on d4, action in the centre and nothing much for Black to attack.

17 ♜xd3 ♟c5+ 18 ♟d4 ♟f5! 19 ♜xf5 ♟e6 20 ♟e3 ♟xd4 21 ♜d3

Hübner later criticised this natural move, preferring 21 ♟xd4 ♟xd4+ 22 ♟h1 ♟xb2 23 ♚ad1 d4 24 ♚d3 when the opposite bishops give White promising attacking chances as Black's bishop is not helping with

the defence. All this despite being a pawn down (the d-pawn is going nowhere as White has total light-square domination).



21...Qxb3 22 axb3 d4 23 ♖f2 ♜d5 24 h3 ♞fe8 25 ♡h2

A waste of time according to Hübner.

25...a5 26 ♞ec1 ♖b6 27 ♞c2 ♞ec8 28 ♞ac1 ♞xc2 29 ♞xc2 a4 30 bxa4 bxa4 31 ♖e1 ♜b3

The ending is equal.

32 ♜xb3 axb3 33 ♞c6 ♖a5 34 ♖xa5 ♞xa5 35 ♖b6 d3 36 ♞d6

If 36 ♞xb3 then 36...♞d5.

36...♞a2 37 ♞xd3 ♞xb2 38 ♡g3 g5 39 f5 ♞e2 40 ♞xb3 ½-½

This is another example of ...c7-c5 leaving Black with a double-edged pawn structure.

Game 51 Alekhine-Euwe

Netherlands (13th matchgame) 1935

1 e4 e5 2 ♡f3 ♡c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♡f6 5 0-0 ♡xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 a4

A favourite of Alekhine, this sensible move often crops up as a sideline.

10...b4!

Both 10...♡a5? 11 axb5 axb5 12 ♖c2 0-0 13 ♡d4, as in Ahues-Montacelli, San Remo 1930, and 10...♞b8 11 axb5 axb5 12 ♡d4 ♡xc5 13 f3 ♡c5 14 ♖c2 ♖d7 15 b4, as in Alekhine-Rohachek, Munich 1941, were both

much better for White.

Black must keep the a-file closed at this early stage in the game (in Chapter 11, 9 a4 is also best met by 9...b4).

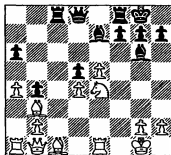
11 ♡d4

After 11 ♖e3 0-0 12 cxb4 Murey-Demarre, Paris 1990, Black does best to play 12...♡xb4 freeing the c-pawn for its advance. 11...♡xe5!

Courageous but 11...♡xd4 12 cxd4 c5! is worthy of further investigation, e.g. 13 f3 c4 (not 13...♡g5 14 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 15 f4 c4 16 fxg5 cxb3 17 ♜xb3 with better chances for White according to Korchnoi) 14 ♖xc4 (14 ♖c2 ♡c5! 15 ♡d2 ♡b7 16 f4 ♜b6 17 ♡f3 g6, as in Klavins-Ostrauskas, USSR 1957, looks like a good French for Black) 14...♡g3 15 ♖xd5 ♜xd5 16 hxg3 ♞d8 17 ♖e3 ♖c5, which Korchnoi regards as equal.

12 f4 ♡c4?!

More active is 12...♖g4, when after 13 ♜c2 c5 14 fxg5 cxd4 15 cxd4 0-0 16 ♡d2 ♖e2 17 ♞e1 ♞c8 18 ♜b1 ♖h5 Black meets 19 ♡xe4 with 19...♖g6.



In this position relatively best is 20 ♜d3 dxe4 21 ♜d1 ♖h4 22 ♞f1 ♖g5 with equal play in Evans-Hanauer, New York 1949. Other tries seem lacking: 20 ♖c2 dxe4 21 ♖e3 ♖h4 22 g3 ♖g5 23 ♖xg5 ♜xg5 24 ♖xe4 ♜d2 and Black was more active in Poletaev-Zbandutto, correspondence 1956, and 20 ♡f6+?! ♖xf6 21 ♜a2 ♖h4 22 g3 ♖e4 when Black is better (Korn) as the

queen on a2 is decidedly out of play!
13 f5

Natural but later analysts discovered 13 ♖e2! ♠a5 14 ♙c2 0-0 15 ♚d2! with advantage to White, e.g. 15...♙c5 (15...♚xd2 16 ♚xe6 fxe6 17 ♖xe6+ ♜h8 18 ♙xd2 and 15...♚f6 16 ♚xe6 fxe6 17 ♖xe6+ ♜h8 18 ♚f3 are not much better) 16 ♚xe4 dxe4 17 ♖xe4 ♙xd4+ 18 cxd4 g6 19 f5 ♙d5 20 ♖g4 with a decisive attack in Gibl-Sleihad, correspondence 1954-56.

13...♙c8 14 ♖e1

With the threat of taking on c4 (followed by e4) or recovering the pawn on b4.

14...♙b7 15 cxb4 c5!

The standard counter. Now the pin on the a7-g1 diagonal will be too strong, hence White's reaction.

16 f6! ♙xf6 17 ♚f5 0-0 18 bxc5 ♚e8 19 ♖b4 ♖c8

The black pieces are well placed, whereas White has not completed his development and is in danger of simply being a pawn down.

20 ♙xc4 a5 21 ♖a3 dxc4 22 ♚c3 ♚xc5

Marovic recommends 22...♚xc3 23 bxc3 ♚e2 24 ♚a2 ♙xg2, but then 25 ♚xe2 ♙xf1 26 ♚d6 ♖c6 looks rather messy. Instead a simple way to an advantage is 24...♚xa2 25 ♖xa2 ♖xc5+.

23 ♙e3 ♖c6 24 ♚f3 ♚d3

24...♚e5! 25 ♚d4 ♖e8 seems to win.

25 ♚af1 ♚xe3!

A temporary exchange sacrifice which reduces White's defensive capabilities. Now the a8-h1 diagonal is a major problem.

26 ♚xe3 ♙d4 27 ♖e7

If 27 ♚cd1 then 27...♚c8 wins quickly.

27...♚e5 28 ♜h1 ♚xf3 29 ♙xf3 ♚f8 30 h3

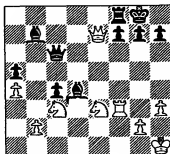
see following diagram

After 30 ♚f5 then 30...♖xf3!

30...♙xe3?

30...♖b6! leaves White with no defence: 31 ♚xc4 (or 31 ♚cd5 ♖xb2 32 ♚f1 ♙xe3

33 ♚xe3 c3 etc.) 31...♖b4 and the win is clear.



31 ♖xe3 ♖e6 32 ♚g3 ♚e8 33 ♖g5 ♖e5 34 ♖xe5 ♚xe5 35 ♚g4 ♚e3?

Consolidation starting with 35...♚c5 was called for. With an extra pawn Black should try to win slowly but surely. The text is met by masterful defensive work, up to a point!

36 ♜g1

Also possible was 36 ♚xc4 ♚xh3+ 37 ♜g1 ♚g3 38 ♚e4! ♚g6 39 ♚c7 f5 (39...♚b6? 40 ♚c5) 40 ♚xb7 fxe4 41 ♚e7 with a likely draw.

36...♚d3 37 ♚xc4 ♚d2 38 b4 ♚xg2+ 39 ♜f1 ♚b2 40 ♚d4! g6 41 bxa5 ♚c2 42 ♚b5 ♜g7 43 ♜e1 ♚c544 ♚d6 ♙c6 45 a6 ♙xb5 46 a7 ♙c6 47 ♚xc6 ♚a5 48 ♚c7 ♚xa4 49 ♜d2 g5 50 ♜c3 h5 51 ♜b3 ♚a1 52 ♜c4 g4 53 hxg4 hxg4 54 ♜d4 ♜g6 55 ♜e5?

Giving an unnecessary chance; 55 ♜c3! was correct.

55...f6+

Instead 55...♚a4!, cutting the king and threatening ...f7-f5, looks winning to me, for instance 56 ♚c4 f6+! 57 ♜e6 ♚a6+ 58 ♜d5 ♚xa7 59 ♚xg4+ ♜f5 60 ♚g1 ♚d7+.

56 ♜f4 ♚a4+ 57 ♜g3 f5 58 ♜h4 ♜f6 59 ♚b7 ½-½

An important historic game which Euwe should have won. The opening chosen by Alekhine shouldn't be dangerous for the well prepared player.

Summary

In this chapter we have seen a selection of older ideas and tricky move orders.

Against 10 ♖c2, 10 ♜e2 and 10 ♜e1 the simplest reply is the universal 10...♘c5 with play as in Chapter 5.

As with most lines involving an early a2-a4 by White, Black does best to react to 10 a4 with 10...b4.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6
9 c3 ♖e7

10 ♜e2

10 ♜e1 - Game 50

10 a4 b4 (D) - Game 51

10 ♖c2 ♘c5

11 h3 - Game 46

11 ♜e1 ♖g4 12 h3 ♖h5 13 b4 (D) - Game 47

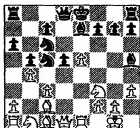
10...0-0 11 ♜d1 ♘c5

11...♜d7 - Game 49

12 ♖c2 (D) - Game 48



10...b4



13 b4



12 ♖c2

CHAPTER EIGHT

9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♖e3



1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♟c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜a4 ♟f6
5 0-0 ♟xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♜b3 d5 8 dxe5
♜e6 9 c3 ♜e7 10 ♜e3

With this move White develops his queen's bishop to control the key d4- and c5-squares. The move ♜e3 is also popular one move earlier, when Black may then react with 9...♟c5 or 9...♟c5, whereas after 9...♜e7 White may delay or dispense with the move c2-c3. All these ideas are developed in Chapter 11.

Black's two main plans exploit the fact that with the bishop on e3 White has less control of e4 and e5. The first three games in this chapter deal with 10...♟c5, when besides the standard 11...♜g4 (Game 52), the plan ...♟c5-d7xe5 is feasible, as in Games 53 and 54.

In Games 56 and 57 Black builds up in the centre with 10...♞d7 11 ♟bd2 ♞d8 (11...♜g4?! is less effective, as we see in Game 55), allowing White to capture on e4 when the resulting endings are acceptable for Black, although White may retain a very slight pull.

Finally, in Games 58 and 59 White chooses to continue development with 12 ♞e1 0-0 13 ♜c2, forcing Black to finally make a decision about the knight on e4. These games are critical as Black's best at

move 13 is not yet clear.

Game 52

Dolmatov-Yusupov

Wijk aan Zee (11th matchgame) 1991

1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♟c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜a4 ♟f6
5 0-0 ♟xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♜b3 d5 8 dxe5
♜e6 9 c3 ♜e7 10 ♜e3 ♟c5

10...♞d7 is the subject of Games 55-59, while after 10...0-0 transposition to Games 57-59 is likely with 11 ♟bd2 ♞d7 and then ...♞d8.

11 ♜c2

The natural 11 ♟bd2?! is an error due to 11...♟d3!, hitting both b2 and e5.

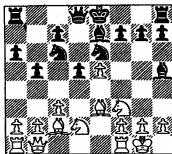
11 ♟d4?! is no good either: 11...♟xe5 12 ♟xe6 fxe6 13 ♜d4 ♟f7 14 ♜xg7 ♞g8 15 ♜d4 ♟xb3 16 axb3 e5 17 ♜e3 c5 with a big centre and a clear advantage for Black in Laykan-Flear, Hastings Challengers 1988/89.
11...♜g4

Black prepares the retreat ...♟e6 to the blocking square. This same plan is covered in Chapter 5, the difference being that there White delays the development of his queen's bishop. Here, once ♜e3 has been played, the plan is much less popular for Black. See Games 53 and 54 for the alternative, 11...♟d7.

12 ♖bd2 ♖e6 13 ♜b1!

This neat move, unpinning and eyeing h7, wasn't available in Chapter 5 (with the bishop still on c1). Black now has to spend time bringing his bishop back to g6 in order to castle.

13...♗h5



14 ♖f5?!

With Black losing time to get his king to safety, White can obtain the better game by immediately playing on the queenside:

a) More to the point is 14 a4! b4 15 a5 ♖g6 16 c4 0-0 17 ♗d1 cxc4 18 ♖xg6 hxg6 19 ♜e4 ♖a7 20 ♖xc4 ♜c8 21 ♖xa7 ♜xa7 22 ♖d4, as in Jansa-Kelecevic, Sarajevo 1981, when White is somewhat better organised.

b) Another good plan is 14 b4 ♖g6 15 ♖b3 0-0 16 a4 ♜d7 17 axb5 axb5 18 ♖xg6 hxg6 19 ♜d3 (Stoica), which also gives White slightly annoying pressure against d5 and b5.

14...♖g6 15 ♗d1 ♜d7 16 ♜c2

16 g4 is aggressive but risky, e.g. 16...0-0 17 ♖e4 (17 h4 h5! 18 ♖xg6 fxg6 19 ♜xg6 ♖f4 20 ♖xf4 ♜xf4 provokes complications in which White's king is the more exposed to attack) 17...♖a5 18 ♖g3 c5 19 h4, as in Kindermann-Kwatschewsky, Beersheva 1985. Here White's attack looks dangerous but Kindermann no longer believes in it, giving 19...♖c4! 20 ♖c1 f6 21 h5 ♖xf5 22 gxf5 fxe5 23 fxe6 ♜xe6 when Black has good

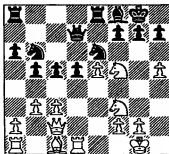
compensation for the sacrificed piece with his good centre and chances of launching an attack against White's fragile kingside.

16...0-0 17 ♖f1 ♖a5 18 ♖g3 c5 19 h4 ♖c4 20 ♖c1 ♜fe8 21 b3 ♖b6 22 h5

Finally forcing Black to yield the f5-square but he has had time to complete his development.

22...♖xf5 23 ♖xf5 ♖f8

Black has played as solidly as possible. He will try to make something of his queenside majority whilst staving off attacking ideas by White.



24 ♖e3 ♜c6 25 ♖h2 a5 26 ♖g4 ♖d7 27 ♗d2 b4 28 ♗ad1 ♖c7 29 ♖f4 bxc3 30 ♜xc3 ♜e6 31 ♜g3 ♖h8

Clearly not 31...♜xf5?? which loses on the spot to 32 ♖h6+.

32 ♖fe3 d4 33 ♖c4 ♖d5

White has run out of steam. Black covers all his sensitive points and is ready for ...a5-a4 and ...♖c3.

34 h6?

Desperate stuff. Black now uses the g-file and the doubled h-pawns to positive effect, so White should have avoided this self-destructive approach.

34...gxf6 35 ♗e1 ♗a6

A useful defensive move but 35...h5 would have won further material.

36 ♜f3 h5!

Winning the exchange and the game.

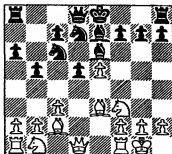
37 ♖h2 ♖xf4 38 ♜xf4 ♖h6 39 ♜h4

♙xd2 40 ♖xd2 ♜f5 41 f4 ♖f8 42 ♚f1 ♚g6 43 ♖c4 ♜e4 44 ♚f2 d345 ♜xh5 ♖e6 46 ♜f3 ♜xf3 47 ♚xf3 ♖d4 48 ♚xd3 ♖e2+ 49 ♖f1 ♖xf4 50 ♚f3 ♖xg2 51 ♚xf7 ♖g8 52♚c7 ♚f8+ 53 ♖e2 ♖f4+ 54 ♖e1 ♚g1+ 55 ♖f1 ♖d5 56 ♚xc5 ♚gxf1+ 57 ♖e2 ♚f2+ 58 ♖d3 ♖b4+ 0-1

A model illustration of defence combined with gradual progress on the queen's flank.

Game 53
A.Sokolov-Flear
Clichy 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♙e6 9 c3 ♙e7 10 ♙e3 ♖c5 11 ♙c2 ♖d7



In my opinion, this is more logical than 11...♙g4 as Black hits the e5-pawn which is less easy to defend now that the bishop blocks the e-file.

12 ♚e1

Alternatively:

a) White cannot hold onto the pawn by 12 ♙f4? as 12...g5! is good for Black: 13 ♙e3 (13 ♙g3 h5! invites Black to start a crushing attack) 13...♖dxe5 14 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 15 ♙d4 f6 16 ♖d2 ♙d6 17 ♚e1 0-0 and White had no real compensation in A.Sokolov-Kaidanov, Vilnius 1984.

b) 12 ♙d4 is worth a try, when the game Sulskis-Korneev, Linares 2000, continued in

bizarre fashion: 12...g5 13 ♚e1 g4 14 ♖fd2 ♖b8 15 b4 a5 16 a3 ♖c6 17 ♖b3 a4 18 ♖c1 ♖xd4 19 cxd4 ♖b6 with an unusual position.

c) 12 ♖d4? leads to a long forcing variation which seems fine for Black:

c1) 12...♖dxe5 13 f4 ♖c4 14 ♖xc6 ♖xc3 15 ♖xd8 ♖xd1 16 ♖xe6 ♖e3 17 ♖xc7+ ♖d7 18 ♖xa8 ♖xc2 19 ♖b6+ (19 ♖d2 ♙c5+ 20 ♖h1 ♖xa1 21 ♚xa1 ♚xa8 22 ♚e1 ♖d6 23 g3 ♚c8 was agreed drawn at this point in Tal-Timman, Montpellier 1985) 19...♖c6 20 ♖xd5 ♙c5+ 21 ♖h1 ♖xd5 22 ♖d2 (after 22 c4+ Black's best is 22...♖e6!) 22...♖xa1 23 ♚xa1 ♚e8 24 ♚d1 ♚e2 with a strong initiative that is worth a pawn in Denis-Flear, Le Touquet 1988.

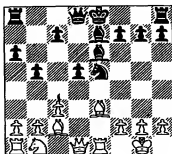
c2) Capturing with the other knight 12...♖cxe5 looks dangerous but is not by any means fully worked out, e.g. 13 f4 ♖c4 14 ♙f2 ♖b8 (is this really Black's best?) 15 ♚e1 ♜d6 16 f5 ♙d7 17 ♜e2 ♖d8 18 b3 ♖a5 19 ♙g3 with attacking chances for the pawn in Imanaliev-Sagalchik, Frunze 1989.

12...♖dxe5

If Black chickens out with 12...0-0 then White should probably be better, e.g. 13 ♙f4 ♖b6 14 ♖d4 (I prefer 14 ♖d2 followed by 15 ♜b1, as Black will have to make a concession on the kingside and there is not the same counterplay as in the game; White is then fully deployed and has slightly better chances) 14...♖xd4 15 cxd4 c5 16 ♖d2 ♖c4 17 ♖b3? (fishing in troubled waters) 17...♖xb2 18 ♜b1 c4 19 ♙xh7+ ♖h8 20 ♚e3 ♜c8 (20...cxb3 is possible here but the attack is rather dangerous after 21 ♙f5) 21 ♙c2 c3 (after 21...cxb3 22 axb3 White wins back the piece and is doing well) 22 ♖c5?! ♙xc5 23 ♚xc3 ♙xd4 24 ♚xc8 ♚axc8 and Black was on top in Dolmatov-Yusupov, Wijk aan Zee (7th matchgame) 1991. Instead of 22 ♖c5?! Yusupov gives 22 ♜e1 b4 23 a3 as better for White, but I'm not sure why! After 23...a5 White's only chance is to break through against Black's king, but the

likelihood of this happening is questionable.

13 ♖xe5 ♖xe5



14 ♖d4

A sharp alternative is 14 f4 ♖c4 (14...♖g4? 15 ♖d4 c5 16 f5! is much better for White) 15 ♖d4 c5 16 ♖xg7 ♖g8 17 f5 ♖xf5 18 ♖xf5 ♖xg7 19 b3 ♖b6 20 ♖d2, as in Novik-Sagalchik, Chorzow 1991. The position is unclear. Black has an extra pawn but some problems getting co-ordinated due to his insecure king.

14...♖g6

Everybody now seems to play this move but 14...♖c6 is also possible, e.g. 15 ♖xg7 ♖g8 16 ♖d4 (Krasenkov prefers 16 ♖h5) 16...♖xd4 17 cxd4 ♖d6 18 ♖d2 ♖f6 19 ♖f3 0-0-0 with balanced chances in an unbalanced position in Watson-Kaidanov, Moscow 1985.

15 ♖xg7 ♖g8 16 ♖xg6 ♖xg7

16...hxg6?! was once played by my wife.

The problem is that after 17 ♖e5 Black will probably be obliged to exchange dark-squared bishops and he will be left with a bad bishop against the white knight.

17 ♖xe6

Black had the better chances after 17 ♖h5! ♖f8 18 ♖d2 ♖d6 19 ♖f1 ♖f6 20 ♖f3 ♖d8 in Morozovitch-Flear, Hyères 1992, when the bishop pair became troublesome.

17...hxg6 18 ♖e5

18 ♖e2 is considered in Game 54.

18...c6 19 ♖d2 ♖f8 20 ♖f3 ♖f6 21 ♖e2

♖h7 22 ♖d2 ♖d6

Theory prefers 22...♖g7 23 ♖f4?! (23 g4! Of course!) 23...♖b8 24 ♖g4 ♖c8 25 ♖f4 ♖b8 which was drawn without further play in Kuczynski-Flear, Polanica Zdroj 1992, but I'm not fully satisfied with Black's position.

23 g4!

I remember being shocked when Andrei came up with this totally unexpected move. There is no real weakening of his own king and the threat of squeezing Black for room with g4-g5 is difficult to meet. If Black allows g4-g5 then the king, bishop and rook on h7 step on each others' toes. If he plays ...g6-g5 himself, he then has weaknesses on f5 and h5 as well as the ugly g5-pawn.



23...♖d8 24 g5 ♖g7 25 ♖ae1 c5 26 h4 d4 27 cxd4 ♖xd4

Naturally after 27...cxd4 White blockades the pawn with 28 ♖d3 which then becomes more of a weakness than a strength.

28 ♖g2 ♖e5 29 ♖c2 ♖d4 30 ♖d2 ♖e5 31 ♖c2 ♖d4 32 ♖e4 ♖h8 33 b4 ♖g7 34 bxc5 ♖xc5

Black is finally forced off the long diagonal as 34...♖xc5?? loses to 35 ♖xd4.

35 ♖c3+ ♖h7 36 ♖e5 ♖d4

36...♖h8 may be a better defence but then 37 h5 gxh5 38 ♖f3 yields White an attack.

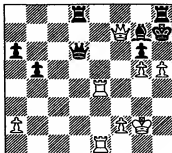
37 ♖f3 ♖xe5

Here 37...♖h8 sheds a pawn and leads to a probably losing ending after 38 ♖xf7 ♖d5

39 ♖f4 ♜xf3+ 40 ♜x3 ♞d7 41 ♞d1
38 ♜xf7+!

A neat finish

38...♙g7 39 h5 1-0



Black is killed along the h-file. Note how the kingside ended all tangled up, which is symptomatic of the variation.

An excellent game by my opponent. Before this game, I had never really had any problems playing 10...♖c5 and 11...♞d7, but this experience has put me off playing like this again.

Game 54
Khalifman-Korchnoi
Ubeda 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♙b5 ♖f6 4 0-0
♗xe4 5 d4 a6 6 ♙a4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8
dxe5 ♙e6 9 c3 ♙e7 10 ♙e3 ♖c5 11
♙c2 ♖d7 12 ♞e1 ♖dxe5 13 ♖xe5 ♖xe5
14 ♙d4 ♖g6 15 ♙xg7 ♞g8 16 ♙xg6
♞xg7 17 ♞xe6 hxg6 18 ♞e2

18 ♞e5 was the subject of Game 53.

18...♜f8

Similarly 18...♞h7 19 ♖d2 ♜f8 20 ♖f3
♙f6 21 h3 ♜g7 22 ♗d3 ♞h8 23 ♞d1 c6 24
♖c5 ♗d6 25 ♖g4 ♞ae8 was equal in
Magem-Flear, Palma de Mallorca 1991.

19 ♖d2 ♞g8

After 19...♙f6 20 ♖f3 ♗d6 21 a4 ♞d8
(better was 21...♞b8! with ideas of ...b5-b4)
22 ♗d3 c6 23 axb5 axb5 24 ♞a6 ♞h7 25 h3

♗c5, as in Tolnai-Gyimesi, Kecskemet 1993,
the move 26 ♖d4! (Gyimesi) would have
given Black problems due to the pawn on c6
and a general looseness in the black camp,
e.g. 26...♞c8 27 ♖xb5!

20 ♖f3 ♙f6 21 ♗d2 ♗d6 22 ♗h6+

22 g4 à la Sokolov is more to the point.

22...♙g7 23 ♗e3 ♞h8 24 a4 bxa4!

Korchnoi finds a novel way of handling
the queenside pawns, note that 24...♞b8 here
seems inferior after 25 ♗a7!

25 ♞xa4 ♙f6 26 ♞a5 ♜g7 27 ♗c5 ♞hd8
28 ♗xd6 ♞xd6 ½-½

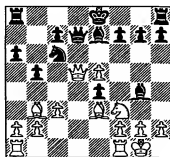
After the exchange of queens the slightly
worse pawn structure is hardly a worry for
Black, who has counter-chances on the b-file
and with ...d5-d4.

Game 55
Lautier-Korchnoi
Ubeda 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♙b5 ♖f6 4 0-0
♗xe4 5 d4 a6 6 ♙a4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8
dxe5 ♙e6 9 c3 ♙e7 10 ♙e3 ♗d7 11
♖bd2 ♙g4?!

A brand-new idea which is, however,
immediately refuted by Lautier. The normal
11...♞d8 is considered in Games 56-59, while
11...0-0 is possible and will probably
transpose to later games in this chapter.

12 ♖xe4 dxe4 13 ♗d5!



The d5-square can often be a problem for

Black after ...♔g4, and this is a clear example. The same move is known from the analogous position in which Black has castled but his queen is still on d8.

13...♜xd5

13...exf3 is out of the question: 14 ♜xf7+ ♔d8 15 ♜xg7! (15 ♜fd1? is less clear, e.g. 15...♖d6 16 exd6 ♜xf7 17 ♖xf7 fxg2 18 dxc7+ ♜xc7 19 ♜d2, though White will soon have an extra pawn) 15...♗e8 16 ♜fd1 ♖d6 17 ♜f6+ with an attack plus an advantage in material.

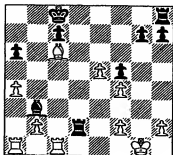
14 ♖xd5 0-0-0

Here 14...exf3 is not possible as the knight on c6 is captured with check.

15 ♖xc6 exf3 16 gxf3 ♖d7 17 ♖e4 ♖e6 18 a4

The game is not yet over but with a clear pawn deficit it's clear that Korchnoi's idea has failed.

18...f5 19 ♖c6 b4 20 cxb4 ♖xb4 21 f4 ♖b3 22 ♜fc1 ♖d2 23 ♖xd2 ♜xd2



24 ♜c3!

The quickest way to activate his position is to give up the b-pawn. Lautier will soon recuperate the sickly black c-pawn, and his rooks can then enter the black camp.

24...♜xb2 25 ♜ac1 ♖e6

After 25...♜d8? Lautier intended 26 ♜xb3! ♜xb3 27 c6 winning.

26 ♖g2 ♜b4 27 ♜xc7+ ♔b8 28 ♗e7 ♜c8 29 ♗e1

Getting behind the passed pawn ready for

its advance.

29...♖b3 30 a5 ♖a4 31 ♜xg7 ♜c7 32 ♜g8+ ♜c8 33 ♜g7 ♜c7 34 ♜g8+ ♜c8 35 ♜g5 ♜xf4 36 e6 ♖e8 37 ♜g7 ♜g4 38 ♜xg4 fxg4 39 ♖d5

Korchnoi has complicated the task as much as possible, but now with an extra advanced passed pawn Lautier is winning.

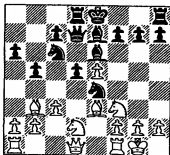
39...♜c7 40 ♗e4 ♖d1 41 ♖c4 ♖f3 42 ♜e3 ♖c6 43 ♜f1

43 ♖xa6? is too hurried as 43...♜a8 wins back the pawn immediately. It's better to take time out to centralise the king, since the a-pawn is not running away.

43...♖b7 44 ♜b3 ♖f3 45 ♔e1 h5 46 ♔d2 ♔d6 47 ♜b6+ ♜c5 48 ♜c3 ♖c6 49 ♜xe6 ♜f8 50 e7 ♖f3+ 51 ♔d2 ♖a4 52 ♖e2 ♜xf2 53 ♜a8 ♜xh2 54 ♜c8+ ♔d6 55 e8 ♖ ♖xe8 56 ♜xe8 g3 57 a6 ♜h1 58 a7 1-0

Game 56
Timman-Korchnoi
Reykjavik 1987

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6 9 c3 ♖e7 10 ♖e3 ♜d7 11 ♖bd2 ♜d8



The logical move, building up the central defences before castling.

12 ♖xe4

The most direct. 12 h3 is the subject of

the next main game and 12 ♖e1 of Games 58 and 59.

12...dxe4 13 ♖xd7+

13...♟xb3 14 axb3 ♟xe5 15 ♖h5 ♟c6? turned out badly for Black in Timman-Korchnoi, Tilburg 1987, when after 16 ♖xa6 ♟xd4 17 ♟xd4 0-0 18 ♖e5 f6 (18...♟f6 19 ♖xf6!) 19 ♖xe4 Black was just a pawn down. Seven years later Korchnoi unveiled the improvement 15...♖d5! 16 ♟f5 ♟f8 (White has the better pawn structure after 16...g6 17 ♟xe7 gxb5 18 ♟xd5 ♖xd5 19 ♖xa6) 17 ♖fd1 ♟d3 18 ♟d4 g6 19 ♖h4? (Korchnoi recommends 19 ♖e2 but concludes that after 19...gxf5 20 ♟xh8 ♖d6 Black has compensation for the exchange) 19...♖xf5 20 ♟xh8 ♟e7 21 ♖g3 f6 22 ♖xa6 ♟f7 23 ♟xf6 ♟xf6 24 ♖xc7+ ♖d7 25 ♖g3 Anand-Korchnoi, Monaco (blindfold!) 1994, when 25...♟f4! 26 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 27 ♖xf6+ ♟g7! wins for Black. Rather than me in a blindfold game(!) but seriously, Korchnoi's improvement 15...♖d5 seems playable.

13...♟xd7

The other recapture 13...♟xd7 might be worth a try. Korchnoi then gives a plausible line 14 ♟g5 ♟xb3 15 axb3 ♟xg5 16 ♟xg5 ♖a8 17 ♖fe1 ♟e6, judging it to be unclear. Black has a well-centralised king but the a6-pawn is a problem.

14 ♟g5 ♟xe5 15 ♟d4!

15 ♟xc4 ♟d3 16 ♖ab1 c5 offers no advantage for White.

15...♟xg5 16 ♟xe5 0-0 17 ♟xc7 ♖c8 18 ♟b6 ♖fe8

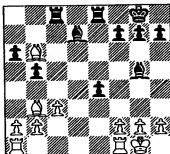
see following diagram

Material is equal, but with unbalanced pawns both sides have chances despite the early simplification.

19 ♖fe1 h5 20 ♟d4?!

20 ♖ad1 ♟c6 is a shade better for White according to Korchnoi. Black can expand on the kingside with ...♟e7, ...g7-g6, ...♟g7 and ...f7-f5 and is probably doing alright, but

White's pieces are better placed and he has the d-file.



20...♟c6 21 ♖e2 ♖cd8 22 h3 h4 23 a4 b4

The most ambitious.

24 ♟c4 ♟b7 25 ♖ae1 bxc3 26 ♟xc3 ♟f6!

The doubled pawns are less of a factor than the cramping effect of the e-pawn and the importance of exchanging White's dangerous bishop.

27 ♟xf6 gxf6 28 f3 ♖d4 29 b3 f5

Natural but Korchnoi now prefers 29...a5.

30 fxe4 ♖xe4 31 ♖xe4 fxe4 32 ♟f2?

White may have an edge after 32 ♖f1! because of 32...♟d5 33 ♟xd5 ♖xd5 34 ♖f4 e3 35 ♟f1! ♖d1+ 36 ♟e2 ♖d2+ 37 ♟xe3 ♖xg2 38 b4 ♖a2 39 a5 ♖a3+ 40 ♟d4 ♖xh3 41 ♟c5 (Korchnoi) but a draw looks likely.

32...♖d2+ 33 ♖e2 ♖xe2+ 34 ♟e2 a5!

In the pure bishop ending Black has the winning chances: He has a useful passed pawn, White's queenside is not going anywhere for the time being and White's pawns are all fixed on light squares.

35 g4

After 35 g3 there is 35...f5! 36 gxf4 f4 and Black will win (Korchnoi).

35...f6 36 ♟e3 ♟f7 37 ♟c4+ ♟e7 38 ♟d4 ♟d6 39 ♟b5 e3!

The only chance to release the blockade.

40 ♟xe3 ♟g2 41 ♟f4 ♟xh3 42 g5 ♟e7 43 gxf6+ ♟xf6 44 ♟c4 ♟c8

It may seem amazing that Black won this game. He only has two rook's pawns and one of them is the wrong one! True, Timman did miss a draw but it wasn't obvious.

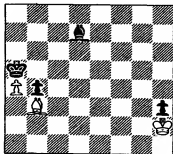
45 ♟d5

Best is 45 b4! axb4 46 a5 ♟e7 47 a6 ♟d6 48 a7 ♟b7 49 ♟g4 and Black cannot win (Korchnoi).

45...h3 46 ♟c4 ♟e7 47 ♟g3 ♟d6 48 b4

A possible alternative was 48 ♟h2 ♟c5 49 ♟g3 ♟b4 50 ♟h2 ♟f5 51 ♟g3 ♟c2 52 ♟xh3 ♟xb3 53 ♟d3 ♟xa4 54 ♟f5 ♟b5 55 ♟c2 ♟c4 56 ♟g3 ♟b3 57 ♟b1 a4 58 ♟f2 a3 59 ♟e1 ♟c3 and Black queens the pawn.

48...axb4 49 ♟b3 ♟c5 50 ♟h2 ♟b6 51 ♟g3 ♟a5 52 ♟c2 ♟e6 53 ♟h2 ♟d7 54 ♟b3



54...♟b6

After the natural 54...♟xa4 Korchnoi is of the opinion that White draws by 55 ♟e6, presumably judging that Black has insufficient time to get the b-pawn going the whole way. However, I think that Black can still win! For instance, 55...♟b6 56 ♟xh3 ♟c5 57 ♟g3 ♟b5 58 ♟b3 (or 58 ♟f2 ♟c4 59 ♟f5 b3 60 ♟c3 ♟b4 61 ♟d2 ♟a3 62 ♟c2 b2 63 ♟b1 ♟b3 and Black wins by getting his king to a1 and then forcing out the bishop with ...♟a2-b1 etc.) 58...♟d4! 59 ♟f2 ♟c3 60 ♟d1 ♟d3.

55 ♟g3 ♟c5 56 ♟h2 ♟d6 57 ♟g3 ♟e6 58 ♟c2 ♟c5 59 ♟d1 ♟c4 60 ♟h2 ♟c3 61 a5 ♟c8 62 ♟g3 ♟d4 63 ♟b3 ♟c5 64

♟a4 ♟e6 65 ♟h2 ♟d6 66 ♟g3 ♟c7 67 ♟c2 ♟c6 68 ♟a4 ♟b7 69 ♟b5 b3 70 ♟d3 b2 71 ♟h2 ♟c6 72 ♟g3 ♟c5 73 ♟h2 ♟c8 74 ♟g3 ♟b4 0-1

Game 57
Bologan-Daniluk
Russia 1997

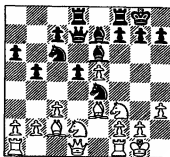
1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♟c6 3 ♟b5 a6 4 ♟a4 ♟f6 5 0-0 ♟xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♟b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♟e6 9 c3 ♟e7 10 ♟e3 ♟d7 11 ♟bd2 ♟d8 12 h3

Cutting out any ideas of ...♟g4.

12...0-0

As so often, White obtains comfortable development after 12...♟d2, e.g. 13 ♟xd2 ♟a5 14 ♟g5 c5 15 ♟fe1 ♟c6 16 ♟ad1 h6 17 ♟xe7 ♟xe7 18 ♟c2 0-0 19 ♟d3 g6 20 ♟e3 ♟g7 21 a3, when in Short-Ljubojevic, Linares 1989, White had the better prospects. He continued with ♟f4 and h3-h4 and went on to win.

13 ♟c2



13...♟f5

The latest try. A sharper alternative is 13...f5 14 exf6 ♟xf6 15 ♟g5? ♟f5 16 ♟xf5 ♟xf5 17 ♟b1 ♟d7 and Black had no particular problems in Kengis-Anand, Riga 1995. Instead 15 ♟b1! ♟h8 (worth investigating is 15...h6? 16 ♟h4 ♟e5) 16 ♟g5 ♟g8 17 ♟f5 (Anand) yields an initiative for White. In the analogous position in

Game 59 (Georgiev-Ivanchuk) Black had access to the g4-square and thus better chances for counterplay.

14 Qxe4

White may have done better to keep the tension for another move with 14 Ne1, since after, say, 14...Nfe8 then 15 Qxe4 could be undertaken under slightly more favourable circumstances.

14...Qxe4 15 Qxe4 dxe4 16 Wxd7 Nxd7 17 e6 Nd3!?

An active approach, although the alternative 17...fxe6 18 Qd2 Qa5! is given as satisfactory by Anand. Black will obtain counterplay by ...Qc4 (if White captures on e4) or by ...Nd3 (after 19 b3 by White).

18 exf7+ Nxf7 19 Qd2 Qc5!

The point. Now capturing on e4 gives White nothing so...

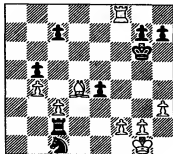
20 Qxc5! Qxd2 21 b4 Qe5 22 Nf1

Daniliuk suggests 22 a4! with the variation 22...Qd3 23 axb5 Qxc5 24 bxa6 Qxa6 25 Nxa6 Nc2 26 Nc6 leading to an extra pawn for White.

22...Nf7 23 Nxd2 Nxd2 24 a4 Qd3 25 axb5 axb5 26 Na8+ Qf7 27 Nf8+

White can retain the better chances with 27 Nd8! Qe6 (27...Nd1+ 28 Qh2 Qxf2?? 29 Nf8+) 28 Ne8+ Qd5 29 Qd4 (Daniliuk). Certainly the black pawns are more exposed, but Black's pieces may be active enough.

27...Qg6 28 Qe3 Nc2 29 Qd4 Qc1!



The complications that follow are

entertaining but neither side misses any significant winning chances.

30 Qh2 Qe2 31 Qe5 Qxc3 32 Ng8 Qd5 33 Nxc7+ Qf5 34 Qd4 Qxb4 35 Ne7!?

No better is 35 Nxc7 c5 36 Nh5+ (36 Qxc5? loses time on the main line after 36...Qg6 37 Nc7 Qd3 etc.) 36...Qg6 37 Nxc5 Nxc5 38 Qxc5 Qd3 39 Qd4 b4 40 f3 exf3 41 gxf3 b3 42 Qg3 b2 43 Qxb2 Qxb2 with an immediate draw.

35...c5 36 Qh8 Qd3 37 g4+ Qg5 38 Qg3 Nxf2 39 Ng7+ Qf6

Not 39...Qh6?? 40 Qh4! Nf4 41 Ng5 Nf7 42 Ng8 and Black is mated!

40 Nd7+ Qe6 41 Nxd3 Nf8

Black recuperates the piece and the rook ending is just a draw.

42 Nc3 Nxc8 43 Qxc5 Nb8 44 Qf4 b4 45 Qxe4 b3 46 Nc6+ Qf7 47 Nc7+ Qf6 48 Nc6+ Qg5 49 Nc5+ Qg6 50 Nc6+ Qg7 51 Nc7+ Qg8 52 Nc1 b2 53 Nb1 Nb3 54 Qd4 Qg7 55 Qc4 Nxc3 56 Nxb2 Ng3 57 Qd4 ½-½

Game 58 Khalifman-Mikhalevski Linares 1997

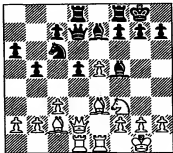
1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qb5 a6 4 Qa4 Qf6 5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Qb3 d5 8 dxe5 Qe6 9 c3 Qe7 10 Qe3 Wd7 11 Qbd2 Nd8 12 Ne1 0-0

The actual move order in the game was 10...0-0 11 Qbd2 Wd7 12 Nc1 Nd8.

13 Qc2 Qxd2

The challenging 13...f5 is considered in the next main game, whereas 13...Qf5 14 Qxe4 Qxe4 15 Qxe4 dxe4 16 Wxd7 Nxd7 17 e6 fxe6 18 Qd2 left White with an edge due to better pawns and use of the c5-square in Dolmatov-Yusupov, Wijk aan Zee (1st matchgame) 1991; compare this with the previous main game with the difference that there White had played the less useful h2-h3 instead of Ne1).

14 Wxd2 Qf5 15 Nd1



15...♖xc2

An attempt to improve on 15...♞fe8 16 ♖f4 (Dvoretsky proposes meeting 16 h3 with 16...♖xc2 17 ♜xc2 f6) 16...♜e6 17 ♖g3 ♜g6 18 ♖xf5 ♜xf5 19 ♜e3 when Black is solid-enough but White has more options (typically he will play ♖d4, to meet ...♜g6 by f2-f4-f5 and ...♖xd4 with c2xd4 and play on the c-file). For example, 19...♖f8 (19...♜g6 with the idea 20 ♖d4 ♖c5 is a suggestion of Krasenkov's) 20 h3 h6 21 ♖d4 ♜g6 (less good is 21...♖xd4 22 cxd4, as in Anand-Kamsky, Monaco rapidplay 1995, as the c7-pawn becomes an obvious target) 22 f4 ♖xd4 23 cxd4 c5! 24 dxc5 ♖xc5 25 ♜xc5 ♜xg3 26 ♜f2 ♜xf2+ 27 ♜xf2 d4 28 ♜e2 g5 29 g3 f6 and Black had enough counterplay in Lautier-Krasenkov, Yerevan Olympiad 1996.

An interesting alternative is 15...♖a5 16 ♖d4 ♖e4 17 ♖xe4 dxe4 18 ♜c2 ♖c4 19 ♖f4 (Krasenkov recommends 19 ♜xe4 ♖xb2 20 ♞a1! with the better prospects) 19...c5 20 e6 fxe6 with satisfactory play for Black in a lively position, as in Cherniaev-Krasenkov, Russia 1992.

16 ♜xc2 ♜g4 17 h3 ♜e4 18 ♜d2 ♖xe5

A fearless pawn-grab which looks suicidal at first sight.

19 ♖xe5 ♜xe5 20 ♖f4

White must have contemplated 20 ♖xc5 ♜xe1+ 21 ♞xe1 ♖xc5; it's nice to win the queen but Black has adequate material

compensation and covers the weak points fairly well. Then 22 b4 looks like the best try, forcing Black to commit the bishop early, but 22...♖b6 23 ♞e7 d4! is only about equal.

20...♜f6 21 ♖xc7 ♞d7 22 ♖e5 ♜f5 23 ♜d3

White settles for a slightly favourable ending as Black has no compensation for his isolated pawn. This is natural enough, but as this proves insufficient to win perhaps 23 ♜d4 could have been tried, trying to create threats and weaknesses with the queens on.

23...♜xd3 24 ♞xd3 f6 25 ♖d4 ♜f7 26 f4 ♖d6 27 f5 ♞e8 28 ♞xe8 ♜xe8 29 ♜f2 ♞e7 30 ♞e3 ♖e5

The simplified ending after 30...♞xe3 is probably playable, but the bishop is happy on this good defensive outpost and the defence is simpler with rooks on.

31 ♖c5 ♞d7 32 ♜f3 ♜d8?!

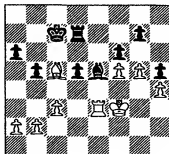
Black can generate counterplay with 32...g6 33 g4 gxf5 34 gxf5 ♞g7 as pointed out by Mikhaljevski.

33 g4 h6

Passive, again 33...g6! should be tried.

34 h4 ♜c7 35 g5 h5

Keeping the king out of g4 and h5 etc.



36 g6?

36 ♖f8 gives winning chances according to Khalifman, e.g. 36...♞f7 37 ♖b4 ♞d7 38 g6 threatening ♖f8 followed by ♞xe5 and f5-f6.

36...♞d8 37 ♜e2 ♜c6 38 ♖d4 ♜d6 39

♠d3 a5 40 a3 a4 41 ♖e1 ½-½

Black never fully equalised (until the end, that is) but this variation has a certain solidity and some strong Open experts have been willing to play the black pieces here.

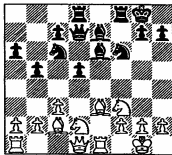
If the plan of 13...♗xd2 and 14...♙f5 seems a little dull, however, then the next game illustrates a more dynamic plan which offers realistic winning chances for Black.

Game 59
Ki.Georgiev-Ivanchuk
Manila Olympiad 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♗f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5
♙e6 9 c3 ♙e7 10 ♙e3 ♗d7 11 ♗bd2
♗d8 12 ♖e1 0-0 13 ♙c2 f5

Combative. The knight is supported and there is even the threat of ...f5-f4 in the air, so White has no choice but to take the pawn.

14 exf6 ♗xf6



15 ♖b1

This move, fighting for the b1-h7 diagonal, is a logical counter to the early opening of the e- and f-files. A further ...h7-h6 will leave the black kingside looking exposed.

Instead 15 ♗g5 ♙f5 16 ♙f4 (16 ♙xf5 ♖xf5 leaves Black with a healthy game) 16...♙c5 17 ♗b3, as in Khalifman-Hjartarson, Lucerne 1993, was met by 17...♙xf2+ 18 ♗xf2 ♙xc2 19 ♖xc2 ♗e4+

20 ♗xe4 ♙xf4+ 21 ♗g1 dxe4 22 ♙xe4 ♖f5
23 ♙e2 ♖xc2 and the players agreed to a draw.

Khalifman has abandoned his earlier try of 15 ♗b3 ♙g4 16 ♙c5 ♙d6 17 h3 ♙h5 18 ♖d3, as in Khalifman-Hübner, Manila Interzonal 1990, due no doubt to Korchnoi's suggestion of 18...♙xf3 19 ♖xf3 ♗e4 20 ♖h5 ♙f5 21 ♖g4 h5 when Black is on top.

15...h6

Otherwise 16 ♗g5 was threatened.

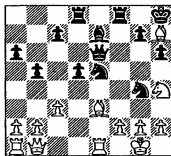
16 ♗h4

Worthy of consideration is 16 h3! which is not mentioned by ECO, but I think is rather annoying as Black's counter-chances often feature use of the g4-square. For instance, the variation 16 ♗b3 ♗g4! 17 ♗c5 ♙xc5 18 ♙xc5 ♙xf3! 19 gxf3 ♗ge5 20 ♖d1 ♙f5 offers Black adequate compensation according to Kiril Georgiev.

16...♗e5

If 16...♙d6 17 ♗df3 with advantage and 16...♗g4? 17 ♙h7+ ♗h8 18 ♗g6+ winning for White (Kiril Georgiev).

17 ♗b3 ♗fg4 18 ♗c5 ♖c8 19 ♗xe6
♖xe6 20 ♙h7+ ♗h8



21 ♙f5

Apparently the remarkable move 21 ♙g5!! (suggested by Ivanchuk) is best, when his following variation is beautiful: 21...♙c5! 22 ♗g6+ ♖xg6 23 ♙xg6 ♙xf2+ 24 ♗h1 ♙xe1 25 ♖xe1 ♗f2+! 26 ♗g1 ♗h3+ 27 ♗h1 ♗f2+ with a repetition.

21...♖f7 22 ♖g6+ ♖xg6 23 ♖xg4 ♖e5
24 ♖e2 c5!

Black takes the initiative and thus gets his majority rolling.

25 ♖d1 ♖c6 26 ♖f1

To cover f2 as the bishop is about to be booted away.

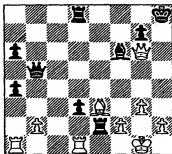
26...d4 27 cxd4 cxd4 28 ♖c1 ♖b4 29 ♖d3 ♖xd3 30 ♖xd3 ♖c4 31 ♖d1 ♖f6
32 a4 ♖fe8 33 ♖f1 ♖c7 34 g3?!

White is struggling but this makes things worse. 34 ♖g1 was more prudent as now Black picks up a pawn.

34...♖c6 35 ♖g1 bxa4 36 ♖f4 ♖b5

To exchange his h-pawn for the white b-pawn. This is okay in principle but Black then has to be careful with such an open king.

37 ♖g6 d3 38 ♖xh6 ♖e2 39 ♖e3



39...♖xb2?

An imperceptible loosening which is cleverly exploited by his opponent. The safe

way to take the pawn was 39...♖xb2 with a dominating position.

40 ♖g4!

Threatening the a4-pawn and worse: 41 ♖h4+ followed by the capture of the rook on d8 with check.

40...♖d7 41 ♖h4+ ♖g8 42 ♖xa4 ♖d5
43 ♖g4 ♖e8 44 ♖c4

White has the better chances in the ending. The black pawns are split and his counterplay is unconvincing.

44...♖xc4 45 ♖xc4 d2

The only chance.

46 ♖f1!

The d-pawn is immune! (46 ♖xd2? ♖8xe3! or 46 ♖xd2? ♖d8 47 ♖c2 ♖d4). Now Black has to sacrifice the exchange.

46...♖8xe3 47 fxe3 ♖xh2 48 ♖h4 ♖xh4
49 g4x4 ♖c1 50 ♖e2 a5 51 ♖f1?

Kiril Georgiev showed later that 51 ♖g1! wins: 51...a4 52 ♖d1 a3 53 ♖g6 ♖f7 54 h5 ♖f8 55 ♖a6 ♖f7 56 e4 ♖e7 57 e5 ♖f7 58 ♖a7+ ♖e6 59 ♖xg7 ♖xe5 60 h6 a2 61 ♖a7 a1 ♖ 62 ♖xa1 ♖f6 63 ♖a6+ ♖f7 64 h7 ♖g7 65 ♖h6 ♖h8 66 ♖h5 ♖b2 67 ♖xd2.
51...a4 52 e4 a3 53 ♖f5 g6!

Compared to the previous note, with the h-pawn now only on h4 (a dark square!) White cannot make progress.

54 ♖f6 ♖g7 55 ♖a6 ♖f7 56 ♖d1 ♖g7
57 ♖c2 ♖f7 58 ♖c6 ½-½

Georgiev points out that the winning try 58 ♖c6 ♖g7 59 ♖a6 ♖f7 60 e5 ♖b2 61 e6+ ♖e7 62 ♖xd2 ♖f6 63 ♖d3 a2 64 ♖xa2 ♖xe6 65 ♖a4 ♖f7 is only a draw.

Summary

The idea of ♗e3, either on move 9 or move 10, is quite popular as Black's defence is not so simple.

The most reliable tries are the ...♗c5-d7xe5 defence, as in Games 53 and 54, or ...♗d7, ...♗d8, ...0-0 and then ...f7-f5 (Game 59). White can only maintain a nominal pull against these lines. However, the defences based on ...♗g4 (Games 52 and 55) are less convincing and cannot be recommended.

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♗f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 9 c3 ♗e7 10 ♗e3

10...♗c5

10...♗d7 11 ♗bd2

11...♗g4 - Game 55

11...♗d8

12 ♗xe4 (D) - Game 56

12 h3 - Game 57

12 ♗e1 0-0 13 ♗c2

13...♗xd2 - Game 58

13...f5 (D) - Game 59

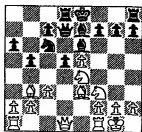
11 ♗c2 ♗d7

11...♗g4 - Game 52

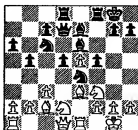
12 ♗e1 ♗dx5 13 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 14 ♗d4 ♗g6 15 ♗xg7 ♗g8 16 ♗xg6 ♗xg7 17 ♗xe6 hxg6 18 ♗e5

18 ♗c2 - Game 54

18...c6 (D) - Game 53



12 ♗xe4



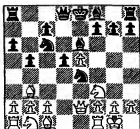
13...f5



18...c6

CHAPTER NINE

9 ♖e2



1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
9 e6 9 ♖e2

With 9 ♖e2 White prepares to bring the king's rook to d1 where it will bear down on the d5-pawn. Another point is that ...♗c5 can be met by ♗e3, reducing Black's influence on the dark squares. Black has three main responses: 9...♗c5, 9...♗c5 and 9...♗e7, which we shall deal with in turn.

The early 9...♗c5 is generally met by 10 ♗e3 (Game 60) where Black ambitiously tried to avoid dull lines involving ...♗xe3.

After 9...♗c5 (Games 61 and 62) White sometimes plays for a quick c2-c4.

Finally, 9...♗e7 is the most popular move, when White usually tries 10 ♗d1 and 11 c4 with pressure on the d5-square. Black can try three main defences: 10...♗c5 transposing back to Games 61 and 62, 10...0-0 11 c4 dxc4 12 ♗xc4 ♖d7 and ...f7-f6 (Game 63); or 10...0-0 11 c4 dxc4 12 ♗xc4 ♗c5 13 ♗e3 ♗xe3 14 ♖xe3 ♖b8 (Games 64-65). Note that if instead of 11 c4 White tries 11 c3, then we transpose to Chapter 7, Games 48-49.

The 9 ♖e2 variation is curious in that White's results are good but the line is out of fashion. It is difficult to say which defence is objectively best, but my conclusions are as follows: the main lines of 9...♗e7 have been

over analysed, whereas 9...♗c5 feels wrong and in fact neither offer a convincing route to equality. I believe that the complex positions resulting from 9...♗c5 may offer Black the best practical chances.

Game 60 Antunes-Flear Pau 1988

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
9 e6 9 ♖e2 ♗c5!?

With the text move Black is not afraid to exchange dark-squared bishops as this frees the e7-square for his queen's knight or queen.

10 ♗e3

Another try is 10 ♗bd2 ♗xd2 11 ♗xd2, when experience suggests that White keeps the faintest of edges after 10...0-0 12 ♗ad1 ♗e8 (less logical is 12...♖d7 13 ♗e3 ♗e7? 14 c3 ♗a5 15 ♗c2 ♗c4 16 ♗c1 c6 17 b3 ♗b6 18 ♗d4 c5 19 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 20 ♖d3 ♖g6 21 ♖d2 ♖h5 22 f4 f5 23 exf6 ♗xf6 24 ♗f3, when in Wittman-Fössmeier, Austria 1989, White held the initiative, backed up by his bishops) 13 ♗e3 (or 13 a4 ♗b8 14 axb5 axb5 15 ♗e3 ♗xe3 16 ♖xe3 ♗e7 17 c3 c6, as in Ljubojevic-Larsen, Linares 1981, when

White is a shade more active but Black has no particular worries) 13...♙e3 14 ♖xe3 ♘a5 (14...♗e7 is also solid) 15 ♘d4 ♗e7 16 c3 c5 17 ♗xe6 fxe6 18 ♙c2 ♘c4 19 ♗e2, as in Smirin-Kaidanov, Norilsk 1987. This type of position frequently occurs in the Open Ruy Lopez. White has the better minor piece but the black position is solid and he has a useful queenside majority.

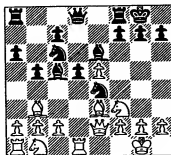
Instead of 12...♞e8, the latest try is 12...♙e7, but 13 h3 (13 ♙e3 ♘a5 14 ♘d2 c5 15 c3 ♗xb3 16 ♗xb3 d4 17 ♞fe1 ♙c4 18 ♗g4 dxe3! gave Black adequate practical play for the queen in Doggers-Rapoport, Dieren 1999) 13...♘a7 14 c3 c5 15 ♙f4 ♘c6 16 ♙c2 ♗d7 17 ♗d3 g6 18 ♗e3 favoured White in Svidler-Golod, European Cup 1999.

10...0-0

Safe but dull is 10...♙e3 11 ♖xe3 ♗e7 12 ♞d1 0-0 13 c3 ♘f5 14 ♗e2 c6 (this position can also arise via 9 ♙e3 and 9 c3 ♙c5 10 ♗d3 0-0 11 ♙e3) when a recent game Apicella-Skembris, Cappella la Grande 1999, continued 15 ♙c2 ♘g5 16 ♘d4 ♗xd4 17 cxd4 f5 18 ♘d2 f4 19 f3 ♙f5 20 ♘b3 a5 with reasonable counter-chances.

Also playable is 10...♗e7 11 ♞d1 ♞d8 12 ♘bd2 ♗xd2 (White obtains a strong attack after 12...♙e3 13 ♖xe3 ♗c5 14 c3 ♙g4 15 ♞e1 0-0 16 ♘d4 ♗xd4 17 cxd4 ♗e6 18 f4, as in Rossetto-Schweber, Argentina 1970; the ...♙g4 idea seems ineffective when the queen is already on e3) 13 ♙xd2 h6 14 ♞ad1 d4 (Black cannot maintain the pawn on d5 but this move offers counterplay) 15 ♙xe6 (if White just captures everything on d4 then Black has ...c7-c5, hitting the rook and threatening ...c5-c4 to trap the bishop) 15...♖xe6 16 ♙xd4 ♗xd4 17 ♗xd4 ♙xd4 18 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 19 ♙xd4 ♖xa2 20 e6! fxe6 21 ♖h5+ ♗e7 22 ♖c5+ ♗f7 (22...♗f6? 23 ♖c3!) 23 g3 (23 h4 is more precise with a slight edge according to Parma) 23...♖xb2 Parma-Korchnoi, Rome 1981, and White has nothing better than a draw.

11 ♞d1



11...d4?!

A speculative idea which sets different problems. Alternatively, 11...♙e3 12 ♖xe3 ♘e7 13 ♘bd2 ♘f5 14 ♗e2 ♗xd2 15 ♖xd2 c6 16 a4 ♖b6 17 axb5 axb5 18 c3, as in Balashov-Smyslov, Tilburg 1977, was a touch better for White, while 11...♗e7 or 11...♘a5 are similar. The exchange of dark-squared bishops limits Black's chances for counterplay, but his position remains solid.

12 ♗c3

12 ♙xe6! fxe6 13 ♙c1! looks better for White.

12...♗xc3 13 bxc3 dxe3

The point of Black's play. For the queen he has rook, bishop and an advanced passed pawn.

14 ♙xd8 exf2+ 15 ♗f1 ♙axd8 16 ♗e4

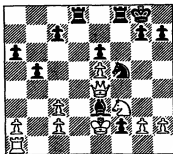
The continuation 16 ♙xe6 fxe6 17 ♘g5 ♞f5 18 ♗xe6 ♞d5 (18...♙xe5? 19 ♗g4 wins) 19 ♗g4 is given as better for White by Antunes, but 19...g6 looks promising for Black, e.g. 20 ♗xc7 ♞dx5 21 ♗xa6 ♘a5! 22 ♗xc5 ♗c4 etc. Antunes also suggests 16 ♘g5! ♙xb3 17 axb3 h6 18 ♗e4 with an edge to White, which looks about right but after 18...♙b6 19 ♗xf2 ♞fe8 20 ♘d3 ♗xe5 21 ♗xe5 f6 22 ♞d1 ♙xd1+ 23 ♖xd1 ♙xe5 a draw is the most likely result.

16...♗e7

16...♙xb3 17 axb3 ♗e7 was less weakening, when the position remains unclear.

17 ♖xe6 fxe6 18 ♠g5 ♠f5 19 ♖e2

19...♖xb3? falls into a deadly trap: 19...♖e3+ 20 ♖e2 ♠d1!; and 19 g4? ♠e3+ 20 ♖e2 g6 also leaves White in trouble. 19...♖e3 20 ♠f3



20...♠d5?

An error. Antunes judges the position to be equal after 20...h5 21 ♖c6 or 20...♖b6 21 ♠g5 ♖e3 repeating.

After the game move I was expecting 21 ♠f1 in order to give the rook for the bishop and f-pawn, but Antunes had seen that White has an attractive forcing line leading to a win. 21 g4! ♠fd8 22 gxf5 ♠d1 23 ♠xd1 ♠xd1 24 ♖a8+ ♖f7 25 fxe6+ ♖e7 26 ♖g8 f1♖+

Finally the passed pawn can metamorphose but to no avail.

27 ♖xe3 ♠e1+ 28 ♖f4 1-0

After 28...♖c4+ 29 ♠g3 ♖xe6 30 ♖xg7+ White is ready to take on e1.

Frankly, this game was unconvincing and there is definitely scope for improvement here. 9...♖c5 and 11...d4 is a risky winning try that may be worth a punt, but do your homework first!

Game 61
A. Sokolov-Marín
Manila Interzonal 1990

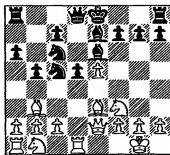
1 e4 e5 2 ♠f3 ♠c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♠f6
5 0-0 ♠xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5

♖e6 9 ♖e2 ♠c5 10 ♠d1 ♖e7

Theory takes a dim view of the immediate 10...♠xb3, e.g. 11 axb3 ♖c8 (or 11...♖e7 12 c4) 12 c4 ♠b4 (or 12...dxc4 13 bxc4 ♖xc4 14 ♖e4 ♠b4 15 ♠a3 ♖b3 16 ♠xb5 ♖xd1 17 ♠xc7+ ♖xc7 18 ♖xa8+ ♖d7 19 ♖g5 ♖xf3 20 ♖xf3 with a strong attack for the piece in Gipslis-Haag, Pecs 1964) 13 cxb5 axb5 14 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 15 ♖d2 (it is considered weaker to grab the pawn; it's better to leave Black with his weak points and attack them) 15...c6 16 ♠d4 ♠a6 17 b4 ♖e7 18 ♠c1 ♠b8 19 f4 ♖a7 20 ♖f2 with a strong initiative for White in Jenkins-Wright, correspondence 1960.

11 ♖e3

The critical 11 c4 is considered in the next main game, while 11 ♠c3 is likely to lead to a transposition to the main game after 11...♠xb3 12 cxb3 0-0 13 ♖e3. Also possible is 11 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 12 ♠c3 ♖c4! (Black seems to have enough for the queen after this move) 13 ♠xd8+ ♠xd8 14 ♖e3 b4 15 b3 ♖e6 16 ♠e4 (not 16 ♠a4 ♠xa4 17 bxa4 ♠xe5!) 16...♠d1+ 17 ♠e1 ♠d4 18 ♖b2 ♠xc2 19 ♖e2 ♖xa1 20 ♖xa1 ♠xa1 21 ♠xc5 ♖xc5 22 ♠d3 ♖b6 23 ♠xb4 0-0 24 ♠c6 f6 25 h4 fxe5! (an improvement on 25...♖h8 26 ♖h2 ♠d7 27 exf6, as in Boleslavsky-Karaklaic, USSR-Yugoslavia 1957) 26 ♖xe5 ♠f6 27 ♠d8 ♖f7 28 ♠xf7 ♖xf7 29 ♖xa1 ♠xf2 30 ♖h2 a5 with equality in Timman-Yusupov, Montpellier Candidates 1985.



11...0-0

Here 11...Qxb3 is playable: 12 axb3 ♖c8 13 Qc3 Qb4 (this knight is comfortable here and in analogous positions; White has difficulty in pushing it back with c2-c3 and it performs a useful function bearing down on c2 as well as defending the a6- and d5-squares) 14 ♕g5 ♕xg5 15 Qxg5 0-0 16 Qce4 (a tactical shot but Black has adequate resources) 16...h6 (or 16...dxe4 17 ♖xe4 ♕f5 18 ♖xb4 ♕xc2) 17 Qxe6 ♖xe6 18 Qg3 (not 18 Qc5 ♖e7 and the knight cannot be maintained) 18...c5 19 f4 f5 20 c3 Qc6 21 ♖f3 ♖fd8 22 Qe2 ♖a7 with a good game for Black in Novik-Sorokin, USSR Championship, Moscow 1991.

Equally unclear is Korchnoi's analysis 16 ♖d2 c5 17 Qe2 h6 18 Qxe6 fxe6 19 c3 Qc6 20 ♖c3 Qe7 21 b4 d4.

12 Qe3

12 c4? only leads to equality after 11...bxc4 13 ♕xc4 Qa5 14 ♕xd5 ♕xd5 15 Qc3 ♕xf3 16 ♖xf3 ♖e8 17 b4 Qd7 18 bxa5 Qxe5 19 ♖f5 Qg6 20 ♖ac1 ♕a3 21 ♖b1, as in Hübner-Korchnoi, Solingen (5th matchgame) 1973.

12...Qxb3 13 cxb3!

Capturing away from the centre always needs justification; here it allows play on the c-file, while by retaining the a-pawn White can push the knight away from b4.

13...♖d7 14 ♖d2 ♖ad8

Not 14...f6?! 15 exf6 ♕xf6 16 ♖ad1 ♕xc3 17 bxc3 ♖ad8 18 c4 bxc4 19 bxc4 ♕g4 20 ♖xd5 when Black has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

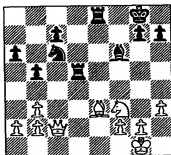
15 ♖ad1 ♖fe8 16 h3

White will capture on d5 but first he wants to be fully prepared.

16...f6 17 Qxd5 ♕xd5 18 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 19 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 20 exf6 ♕xf6 21 ♖c2

The material balance of two rooks for queen and pawn is about equal. White has some prospects with his kingside majority, but not without risk as it is potentially weakening to push the pawns in front of his

own king. Black should wait and see with 21...♖e6 when the position is balanced.



21...Qe5! 22 Qd2 Qd3

After 22...c5 the move 23 ♖f5! creates surprising difficulties.

23 ♖c6

Winning a pawn and thereby enabling White to create a passed pawn, which tips the balance in his favour.*

23...♖dd8 24 ♖xa6 Qxb2 25 ♖xb5 Qd1 26 Qc4 Qxe3 27 Qxe3 ♖e7 28 a4 ♖d2 29 a5 ♖a2 30 b4 ♖a1+ 31 Qh2 ♖f7 32 Qg4 ♕e7 33 Qe5 ♕d6 34 ♖d5 ♕xe5+ 35 ♖xe5 ♖b1 36 a6 ♖xb4 1-0

Game 62
Greenfeld-Pyernik
Israel 1983

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 ♕b5 a6 4 ♕a4 Qf6 5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♕b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♕e6 9 ♖e2 Qc5 10 ♖d1 ♕e7 11 c4 d4!

Best. After 11...Qxb3 12 axb3 Qb4 (or 12...0-0 13 cxd5 ♕xd5 14 Qc3 ♕xf3 15 gxf3 ♖c8 16 Qd5, as in Keres-Alatortsev, USSR Championship, Moscow 1947, and now 16...♕d8 17 ♕f4 Qc7 keeps White down to an edge - Korchnoi) White has a pleasant initiative after 13 Qc3.

12 cxb5 d3!

Again 12...Qxb3 is not good: 13 axb3 axb5 14 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 15 ♕g5 ♕xb3 16 ♖c1 ♕xg5 17 Qxg5 h6 18 Qd2! (18 e6 hxg5 19

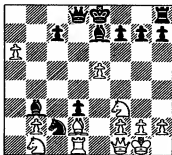
exf7+ is unsound after 19...♔d7! and 18 ♖f3 0-0 19 ♖xb5 ♕a4 20 ♖c5 ♚b8, as in Mecking-Korchnoi, Augusta [4th matchgame] 1974, was only equal) 18...hxg5 19 ♖xb3 0-0 20 e6 and White had more than enough compensation for the pawn in A.Rodriguez-Agzamov, Cienfuegos 1984.

13 ♖f1 ♖xb3!

Now is the time! Others are less promising:

a) 13...♕xb3 14 axb3 ♖b4 15 ♕d2 ♖c2 16 ♚a5 with the better game for White in Kalinkin-Zaitsev, Krasnoyarsk 1960.

b) 13...♖d4 14 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 15 ♕xe6 fxe6 16 ♕e3 ♖xe5 17 ♖d2 with a fairly unclear position which Korchnoi judges as a little better for White. For instance, after the obvious continuation 17...axb5 18 ♖f3 ♖f5 19 ♕xc5 ♕xc5 20 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 21 ♚xd3 ♚d8, White has the better pawn structure. 14 axb3 ♖b4 15 ♕d2 ♖c2 16 ♚xa6 ♚xa6 17 bxa6 ♕xb3



This position was tested in the early eighties but has not seen any recent developments.

18 ♕g5!

Theory prefers this to 18 ♕c3 ♕c4 19 ♖bd2 ♕xa6 20 b3 0-0! 21 ♖c4 ♖b8 22 ♖xd3 ♖xb3 23 ♖a5 ♕xd3 24 ♖xb3 ♕f5 25 ♖bd4 ♖xd4 26 ♖xd4 ♕d7 and the bishop pair and a passed pawn gave Black an edge in A.Rodriguez-Yusupov, Toluca Interzonal 1982.

Note that the flashy 18 ♕h6 loses material after 18...♖b4.

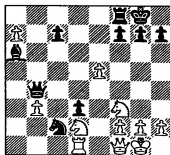
18...♕c4

18...♖b4 was suggested by Korchnoi as a possible improvement.

19 ♕xe7 ♖xe7 20 a7

This annoying pawn will play the role of a decoy so that White has time to get going on the other wing.

20...0-0 21 ♖bd2 ♕a6 22 b8 ♖b4



If now 23 ♖c4 ♖xb3 24 ♖xd3 ♖xd3 25 ♚xd3 ♕xc4 26 ♚c3 then Black has 26...♚a8! 27 ♚xc4 ♚xa7 using White's back-rank weakness to equalise.

23 g3

Now there is no bank-rank problem.

23...♖g4?

23...♖b7! is a clear improvement which is not mentioned by theory. By keeping an eye on the f3-knight, Black has time to round-up the a7-pawn. Who is better here?

Instead, the natural 23...♚a8 fails to 24 ♖c4 ♖xb3 25 ♚b1.

24 h3 ♖f5 25 g4 ♖f4 26 ♖g2 ♚a8?

Black obviously underestimated the weakness of his back rank. Better was 26...♕b7 27 ♖g3 ♖xg3+ 28 fxg3 ♚a8 29 ♖e1 ♖xe1 30 ♚xe1 ♚xa7 31 ♖f2, but White's active king gives him the better ending.

27 ♖g5! ♚xa7 28 ♖c6

The e8-square is a target.

28...♖xe5

28...g6 29 ♖c8+ ♔g7 30 e6! is very nasty indeed!

29 ♖d7 1-0

29...♠a8 30 ♖xf7+ ♔h8 31 ♖h5 wins comfortably.

Game 63
Martens-Flear
Hyères 1991

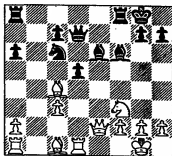
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♘f6
5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♙e6 9 ♖e2 ♙e7 10 ♚d1 0-0 11 c4 bxc4
12 ♙xc4 ♖d7

12...♙c5 is dealt with in the next two main games, while 12...dxc4 is not too bad, though after 13 ♚xd8 ♚fxd8 14 ♘c3 ♘xc3 15 bxc3 h6 16 ♖f4 ♚d3 17 ♘e1 ♚d5 18 ♚d1 ♚ad8 19 ♚xd5 ♚xd5 20 h3, as in Augustin-Petras, correspondence 1978, Black doesn't quite have full compensation for the queen.

13 ♘c3

After 13 ♙e3 Black should simply play 13...f6. Instead 13...♚fd8?! is speculative, although 14 ♙xa6 ♘b4 15 ♖b5 c6 16 ♖d3 ♘xd3? 17 ♖xd3 ♙f5 18 ♖e2 c5 gave Black reasonable play for his pawn in Brustkern-Sturua, Wichern 1999.

13...♘xc3 14 bxc3 f6 15 exf6 ♙xf6



Black has liberated his pieces but White can keep an edge by obtaining the bishop pair with...

16 ♘g5

The two main alternatives are fine for Black:

a) 16 ♖xe6+ is unimpressive after 16... ♖xe6 17 ♙xd5 ♖xd5 18 ♚xd5 ♙xc3 19 ♚b1 ♘b4 20 ♙c5 ♘xa2 21 ♙e3 (21 ♘f1 ♚fb8 22 ♚xb8+ ♚xb8 23 ♙f4 a5 24 ♚xc7 ♚a8 25 ♙e5 is equal according to T.Paunovic) 21...♙f6 22 ♚xc7 ♘c3 and Black's a-pawn guaranteed him the advantage in McKenna-Flear, Hastings 1993.

b) A defence against 16 ♙g5 has been worked out but Black must play precisely; 16...♔h8! (16...♙xc3 is tempting, but White's initiative is sufficient to win back the pawn with the better of it after 17 ♚ac1 ♙f6 18 ♙xf6 ♚xf6 19 ♘g5 ♘e7 20 ♚e1 dxc4 21 ♘xe6 ♘d5 22 ♘c5 ♖f7 23 ♘e4 ♚g6 24 ♖xc4 - Euwe) 17 ♙xf6 (after 17 ♖e3 then Korchnoi's 17...♙xg5 18 ♘xg5 ♙g8 holds everything neatly together) 17...♚xf6 18 ♘g5 ♘a5! (after the immediate 18...♙g8 White can get away with 19 ♙xa6) 19 ♖d3 (here the cheeky 19 ♙xa6 can be met by 19...♙g4 20 f3 ♚fxa6 21 fxg4 h6 22 ♘f3 ♘b3 23 ♚ab1 ♚xa2 and Black recovered the pawn with equality in Sigurjonsson-F.Olafsson, Geneva 1977) 19...♙g8 20 ♘e4 (20 ♙xd5 is safely met by 20...♚d6 21 c4 ♘xc4!) 20...♚g6 21 ♘g3 (21 ♙xd5 leads to an awkward pin after 21...♚d8 22 c4 c6, when White then has to play an unconvincing exchange sacrifice with 23 ♙xg8 ♖xd3 24 ♚xd3 ♚xd3 25 ♙f7 ♚g4) 21...♘xc4 22 ♖xc4 ♙c6 23 ♖d4 ♖f7 24 ♚e1 with equal chances according to Korchnoi.

A new idea 16...♘e7!? (instead of 16...♔h8) worked well in F.Braga-Rosito, Mar del Plata 1999, after 17 ♖b3 h6 18 ♙a4? (18 ♚e1 immediately looks a better try) 18...c6 19 ♚e1 hxg5 21 ♖xe6+ ♖xe6 22 ♚xc6 ♙xc3 23 ♚d1 and Black drew easily. 16...♙xg5 17 ♙xg5 h6

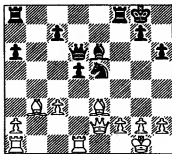
The continuation 17...♚ae8?! 18 ♖d2 ♘e5 19 ♙xd5 ♖xd5 20 ♖xd5 ♙xd5 21 ♚xd5 ♚f5 was refuted by 22 ♚d8! in Geller-Larsen, Copenhagen 1966, when after 22...♘f3+ 23

♖h1 ♜xd8 24 ♜xd8 ♠d2 25 f3 ♜c5 26 ♜c1
Black was still a pawn light.

18 ♜e3 ♠e5

18...♞d6 immediately can be met by 19
♜c5!? ♞xc5 20 ♞xe6+ ♖h8 21 ♜xd5, but
Black can unravel by 21...♞f2+ 22 ♖h1 ♜f6
23 ♞e4 ♜af8 with the threat of mate;
otherwise 19 ♜b3 ♠e5 transposes to the
main game.

19 ♜b3 ♞d6



20 h3

Also promising is the idea 20 ♜d4 c5 21
♜f4 g5 (Krasenkov prefers 21...♠d7 with
equalising chances) 22 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 23 f3
♜f5, when in Vogt-Sydor, Cienfuegos 1975,
White could have kept a small but annoying
edge by continuing 24 ♜d1 c4 25 ♜xc4
♠xc4 26 ♞xc4 ♞xh2+ 27 ♖xh2 dxc4 28
♜d5.

20...♜ae8 21 ♜d4

21 c4? allows the dangerous 21...♜xh3!

21...c5 22 ♜f4 ♠f7?!

Black can cover his exposed pawns with a
solid game after 22...♠d7. Nevertheless,
White has more options due to the bishop
pair. 22...g5!? was played in a similar position
in Vogt-Sydor, see the note to White's 20th
move.

23 ♞h5

White threatens to increase pressure on
the centre with 24 ♜d1, but in fact 23 ♜d1!
immediately may be best, when 23...♞e5 24
♞d2 c4 25 ♜c2 ♠d6 26 ♜xf8+ ♜xf8 27

♜d4 ♞h5 28 ♜e1 was distinctly unpleasant
for Black in Moiseev-Van Perlo, correspon-
dence 1977. Black shouldn't allow the
bishop to sit so snugly on d4, so 22...♠d7 (by
defending the c5-pawn) avoids the necessity
of weakening the central dark squares.

23...♠g5!? 24 ♜xf8+

After 24 ♜d1 then 24...♜xf4 25 ♜xf4
♞xf4?? fails to 26 ♞xe8+, but 24...♞e5 looks
okay.

24...♜xf8 25 ♜xg5 ♞e5 26 ♜d1

26 f4 is well met by 26...♞xc3.

26...c4

26...hxg5 looks dubious after 27 ♜c2.

27 ♜c2 ♞xg5 28 ♞xg5 ½-½

White should have played on as 28 ♞xg5
hxg5 29 ♜b1 (29 ♜e1 ♖f7 and ...♖f6 holds
nicely) 29...♜f5 (or 29...♖f7 30 ♜b6 ♜a8 31
♖f1 aiming for d4) 30 ♜xf5 ♜xf5 31 ♜b6
yields him a safe edge.

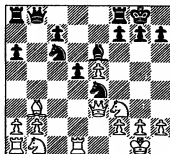
This game convinced me that the
12...♞d7 line doesn't solve all of Black's
problems.

Game 64

Karpov-Korchnoi

Baguio City (12th matchgame) 1978

1 e4 e5 2 ♠f3 ♠c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜a4 ♠f6
5 0-0 ♠xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♜b3 d5 8 dxe5
♜e6 9 ♞e2 ♜e7 10 ♜d1 0-0 11 c4 bxc4
12 ♜xc4 ♜c5 13 ♜e3 ♜xe3 14 ♞xe3
♞b8 15 ♜b3



15...♖a5

After 15...♜b6 (or 15...♜a7) White does best to keep queens on with 16 ♖e2 ♘e7 (or 16...♙ad8 17 ♘c3 ♘xc3 18 bxc3 ♘e7 19 ♙ab1 ♙a5 20 c4 dxc4 21 ♙xc4 ♙xc4 22 ♜xc4, as in Vogt-Strobel, Vraca 1975, when White has somewhat the better chances due to Black's inferior pawn structure) 17 ♘c3! ♘xc3 18 bxc3 c5 19 ♘g5 (also promising is 19 ♙ab1 ♙ab8 20 ♙c2 ♜c6 21 ♘g5 ♙f5 22 ♙xf5 ♘xf5 23 e6) 19...h6 20 ♘xe6 fxe6 21 ♙e1, intending ♙ad1, with slightly the better chances for White. The bishop is the better minor piece especially when it comes to the c2-h7 diagonal.

16 ♘e1

16 ♘bd2 is more testing, see the next main game.

16...♜b6

Nowadays the main line is considered to be 16...♘xb3 17 axb3 f5! (not here 17...♜b6? 18 ♜xb6 cxb6 19 b4!, as in Hübner-Demarre, Dresden 1969, when White has a big advantage as f2-f3 is threatened) 18 exf6! (otherwise after 18 f3 f4 19 ♜d4 c5 20 ♜d3 ♘g5, 18 ♘d3 d4 19 ♜xd4 ♙d8 or 18 ♘d2 c5 19 ♙dcl ♜xe5 Black has good play) 18...♙xf6 19 f3 ♘d6 20 ♘d2 ♙h6 21 ♘f1 (or 21 ♙dcl c5! with threats against h2 in Sakharov-Oim, correspondence 1977) 21...♙f7 22 ♘d3 ♘f5 23 ♜c5 ♜b6 when chances are balanced (Korchnoi).

17 ♜xb6

This time 17 ♜e2 simply loses a pawn after 17...♘xb3 etc.

17...cxb6 18 f3

The pawn grab 18 ♙xd5?! is dubious after 18...♙ad8, and hardly better was 18 ♙c2?! ♘c4 19 f3 ♘c5 20 b4 ♘d7 21 f4 ♙ac8 22 f5? ♘e3 23 fxe6 fxe6 24 ♘d2 ♘xc2 and White resigned in Lenz-Kolev, Vienna 1990. Even if White hadn't blundered with 21 f5, Black already had a good game.

18...♘xb3

Filip gives 18...♘c5! 19 ♙xd5 ♙xd5 20 ♙xd5 ♘c4 21 b3 ♘e3 as unclear but this

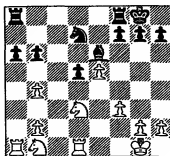
looks too risky to me.

19 axb3 ♘c5 20 b4 ♘d7

20...♘b3? 21 ♙a3 d4 22 ♘d2 ♘xd2 23

♙xd2 will lose a pawn.

21 ♘d3



21...g5?

A poor choice. Keene suggests 21...♙fc8, Korchnoi 21...d4 and Smyslov 21...a5, all of which give equal chances. In each case Black has sufficient activity to compensate for the exposed pawns on d5 and a6.

The text aims to hinder White in the support of his e5-pawn but it loosens the black kingside and is soon regretted.

22 ♘c3 ♙fc8 23 ♘f2 d4!

23...♘xe5 24 ♘xd5 ♙xd5 25 ♙xd5 f6 26 ♘e4 is deceptive as, despite the symmetry, Black has sufficient problems to lose a pawn by force.

24 ♘e2 d3!

Trying to complicate as 24...♘xe5 25 ♘xd4 followed by ♘e4 leaves Black with holes everywhere.

25 ♘xd3 ♙c4 26 ♘g3

After 26 ♘c3 h6! 27 ♘e4 ♙xd3 28 ♙xd3 ♘xe5 29 ♙d5 ♘c4! Black has good drawing chances. Here 26 f4!, hanging on to the pawn, is recommended by most commentators, although Black's active pieces give him reasonable drawing chances.

26...♙xd3 27 ♙xd3 ♘xe5 28 ♙d5 ♘g6!

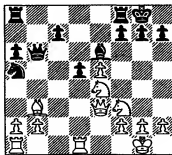
Again ditching a pawn for active play. Black is no longer in danger of losing.

29 ♖g5 ♜c2 30 b3 ♜b2 31 ♠f5 ♜xb3
32 h4 ♠f8 33 h5 ♠e7 34 ♠xe7 ♠xe7 35
♜e1+ ♠f8 36 ♜e4 a5 37 ♜eg4 ♠e7 38
bxa5 ♜xa5 39 h6 ♜xg5 40 ♜xg5 b5 41
♜g7 ♜b1+ 42 ♠h2 ♜d1 43 ♜xh7 ♜d8 44
♜g7 ♜h8 ½-½

A good fight-back by Korchnoi.

Game 65
Kr. Georgiev-Flear
Ano Liosia 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♠f3 ♠c6 3 ♜b5 a6 4 ♜a4 ♠f6
5 0-0 ♠xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♜b3 d5 8 dxe5
♜e6 9 ♜e2 ♜e7 10 ♜d10-0 11 c4 bxc4
12 ♜xc4 ♜c5 13 ♜e3 ♜xe3 14 ♜xe3
♜b8 15 ♜b3 ♠a5 16 ♠bd2 ♜b6



The main alternative is 16...♜a7, but this can transpose back to the game after 17 ♠xe4. Instead the exchange of queens on a7 is not worrying for Black: 17 ♜xa7 ♜xa7 18 ♠d4 (18 ♠xe4 ♠xb3 19 axb3 dxe4 20 ♠d4 c5 21 ♠xe6 fxe6 22 ♜d6 ♜b7 23 ♜a3 ♜bf7, as in Scherbakov-Ruderfer, USSR 1971, was satisfactory for Black; note the importance of the rook on the second rank which is useful for doubling and stopping White coming to the seventh) 18...♠xd2 19 ♜xd2 c5 with adequate counter-chances in Kuijpers-Langeweg, Netherlands 1968.

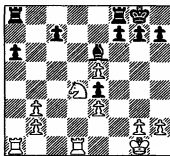
After 16...♜a7, a notable alternative is 17 ♠d4 ♠xd2 18 ♜xd2 ♜b6! 19 ♜c2 c5 (19...♠c4 20 ♜e2 c5 21 ♠f5 is also fine for

Black after 21...♜fe8) 20 ♠f5 ♜xf5 21 ♜xf5 ♜ad8 22 b3 (or 22 ♜e1 ♠c6 23 ♜ad1 ♠d4 24 ♜b1 a5 25 ♜e3 f5 with chances for both sides in Jansa-Stean, Vrsac 1979) 22...♜fe8 23 ♜e1 c4 24 ♜g5 ♜c7, mainly because of the identity of the player of the black pieces, Kavalek-Karpov(!), Montreal 1979, when Black has a good position with at least equality. His central pawns are advancing and White's kingside play is unconvincing.

17 ♠xe4!

Neither 17 ♜xb6 cxb6 18 ♠xe4 ♠xb3 19 axb3 dxe4 20 ♠g5 ♜xb3 21 ♜d6 ♜c2 22 ♜xb6 h6 23 ♠h3 ♜d3 24 ♠f4, as in T.Martin-Behrmann, West Germany 1986, nor 17 ♠d4 ♠xd2 18 ♜xd2 c5 19 ♠xe6 fxe6 20 ♜c1 ♜ac8 21 ♜dc2, as in Koch-Murey, Cannes 1989, and now 21...d4! (Korchnoi) offer White anything.

17...♜xe3 18 fxe3 ♠xb3 19 axb3 dxe4 20 ♠d4



Black has three sensible moves, but which is best? The problem is that in each case, Black has to play well just to hold a draw and has no realistic winning chances.

20...♜fb8

Skembris suggested to me that 20...♜ab8 might be the way to equality, but 21 ♜d1 ♜xb3 22 ♜xc7 ♜b6 23 ♜a7 ♜d5 24 b3 gave White good chances and he went on to win in Timman-Tal, Wijk aan Zee 1982. Here and in the main game the centrally posted knight is a far superior piece to the opposing

bishop, so how about 20...c5!? obliging the knight to exchange itself? Then after 21 Qxc6 fxe6 22 Nd6 (22 Nd7 Nf7) 22...Nfb8 (22...Nab8 23 Na3 is uncomfortable for Black, who will lose a pawn by force, e.g. 23...c4 24 Nxe6 Nxb3 25 Nxb3 cxb3 26 Nxa6 with a clear advantage - Timman) 23 Nxe6 (now 23 Na3 is met by 23...Qf7) 23...Nxb3 24 Nxa6 Nxa6 25 Nxa6 Qf7 26 Na7+ Qg6 (26...Qe6 27 Nxe7 Nxb2 28 Nxb7 allows White connected passed pawns and is therefore better for him) 27 Nc7 Nxb2 28 Nxc5 Black still has a hard fight on his hands to draw despite the fact that the extra pawn is doubled.

21 Ndc1! Nxb3

21...Nb7 was possible.

22 Nxc7 g6?!

22...e6! is the best chance for full equality, e.g. 23 Nd1 Nb6 24 b4 h6 25 Qc6 Ne8 26 Qf2 Qh7, as in Tal-Sturua, Yerevan 1982. Here Black seems to be holding his own but White kept plugging away and won in the end.

It is interesting that after his loss to Timman, Tal then played the same line as White later in the year.

23 h4 Qd5 24 Na5 Nb7 25 Nxb7 Nxb7 26 Nc5 h5

Georgiev prefers 26...Nc8, but the pure knight versus bishop ending is also tough as we shall see.

27 Qf2 a5 28 Qg3 a4 29 Nb5 Qc8 30 Qc6!

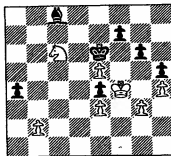
The inferior 30 Qf4 Qg7 31 Qxe4 a3 32 bxa3 Nxa3 gives reasonable drawing chances as Black will seek an active defence involving ...Nb2 etc.

30...Qf8

Although 30...Qd7 31 Nb8+ Nxb8 32 Qxb8 Qb5 traps the knight, White will win after 33 Qf4 Qf8 34 Qxe4 Qe7 35 Qd5 Qf1 36 g3 Qg2+ 37 e4 as the knight can return to the fray with a decisive effect.

31 Nb8 Nxb8 32 Qxb8 Qe7 33 Qc6+ Qe6 34 Qf4 Qa6 35 g3 Qc8

With limited time available my opponent failed to find the win and only after extensive analysis was the truth found.



36 Qd4+?!

The win starts with 36 Qb4! Qb7 37 Qa2 Qd5 38 Qc3 Qc6 39 Qxe4 Qd5 when 40 Qd6 f6 41 exf6 Qxd6 42 Qg5 Qe8 43 Qh6 was my opponent's first try, but this is thwarted by 43...Qe5!! (Flear) 44 Qg7 Qe6 45 e4?! (45 Qf8 Qf7 46 Qg7 is equal) 45...Qf7 46 e5 Qe8 47 Qf8 Qxe5 48 Qxe8 Qxf6 and Black has the only winning chances.

An hour or so later 40 Qd2! Qd7 41 b3!! (Krum Georgiev) was found to do the trick, as after 41...axb3 (41...a3 42 Qb1 a2 43 Qc3+) 42 Qxb3 White cannot be prevented from using his knight with decisive effect on the kingside. The knight comes to g5, d6 or d8 and with a timely e3-e4 or e5-e6 White liberates his king to invade and capture f7 or g6. In an extended post-mortem I vainly tried to defend this position against my opponent and I am now convinced that it is lost.

36...Qd5 37 b3 axb3

37...a3? 38 Qb5 a2 39 Qc3+ picks off the a-pawn.

38 Qxb3 Qa6 39 Qd4 Qd3 40 Qb3 Qf1 41 Qa5 Qa6 42 Qb3 Qf1 43 Qa5 Qa6 ½-½

The presence of the e4-pawn is important; now the f3-square is defended and consequently the bishop is able to stop the knight coming to the kingside.

Summary

The sensible 9 ♖e2 is out of fashion but gives Black a difficult choice.

The 'solid' 9...♗e7 is deeply analysed but a well prepared White player can render it 'passive' and squeeze out a small but persistent edge, as in Games 63 and 65.

The double-edged moves 9...♗c5 (Game 60) and 9...♗c5 (Games 61 and 62) are more fun, particularly the latter. Despite losses in both illustrative games, Black has clear improvements in the notes and 9...♗c5 should be okay.

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♗f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6
9 ♖e2

9...♗e7

9...♗c5 – Game 60

9...♗c5 10 ♗d1 ♗e7

11 ♗e3 – Game 61

11 c4 (D) – Game 62

10 ♗d1 0-0 11 c4 bxc4 12 ♗xc4 ♗c5

12...♗d7 (D) – Game 63

13 ♗e3 ♗xe3 14 ♖xe3 ♖b8 15 ♗b3 ♗a5 16 ♗bd2

16 ♗c1 – Game 64

16...♖b6 (D) – Game 65



11 c4



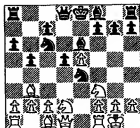
12...♗d7



16...♖b6

CHAPTER TEN

9 ♖bd2



1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 ♖bd2

In recent years 9 ♖bd2 has become very popular. Black faces a decision as to whether to allow transposition to other chapters (particularly Chapter 5 by playing an early ...♖e7) or to try and exploit the fact that White has temporarily less control of the d4-square.

The sharpest method is 9 ♖bd2 ♗c5 10 c3 d4 (Games 70-76) which leads to great complications. Black seems to have a fully satisfactory game – if he knows the theory! The resulting positions require study but the reward for this investment in time will be games rich in fascinating possibilities.

The dangerous-looking 11 ♗g5 has been shorn of its terror as a study of Games 70-72 will show, whereas other, more positional ideas for White are detailed in Games 73-76.

However, Black is not obliged to play for an early ...d5-d4, as Games 66-69 will show.

In Game 66 Black seeks transposition to Part Two by playing 9...♖e7, which White then avoids by means of the immediate 10 ♖xe4.

Game 67 invites transposition to Part One with 9...♖c5 but this often leads to early simplification with 10 ♖xe4.

I think that these moves are also perfectly adequate and have the advantage of avoiding the need to learn the rest of the chapter. The disadvantage, particularly of the latter, is that the resulting ending is a little dull.

Finally, Game 68 examines some unusual ways of handling 9 ♖bd2. These really do require more practical experience at a high level and the conclusions here are provisional.

Game 66 Geller-Krasenkov Cappelle la Grande 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 ♖bd2 ♖e7

Here 10 c3 would return to Part Two.

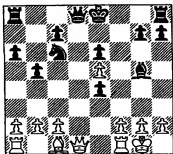
10 ♖xe4 dxe4 11 ♖xe6 fxe6 12 ♗g5

Tarjan judges the position resulting from 12 ♗d2 e3 13 fxe3 ♖xe5 14 ♖h5+ ♗g6 as unclear.

12...♖xe5

Instead 12...♖d5 13 ♖h5+ g6 14 ♖g4 ♖xe5 15 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 16 ♖g3 ♖f7 17 ♖f6 0-0 18 ♖ad1 ♖f5 was about equal in Geller-Unzicker, Bern 1987. However Black should not hurry to exchange queens as after 12...♖xd1! 13 ♖xd1 ♖xe5 14 ♖xe5 ♖f8 15

♠h4 e3 (15...♠f5 16 ♠d2 ♠xe5 17 ♠ad1 also looks awkward for Black) 16 fxe3 ♠f5 17 a4 b4 18 ♠g3 ♠d8 19 ♠d3 ♠f7 20 ♠ad1 White kept the better prospects in Sax-Tarjan, Hastings 1977/78.



13 ♠h5+ g6 14 ♠xg5 0-0

Again the exchange of queens is ill-advised: 14...♠xg5? 15 ♠xg5 0-0 16 ♠f6 ♠b4 17 ♠ae1 with the clearly better game for White whose bishop is a real nuisance. However, Krasenkov prefers the immediate 14...♠d5!

15 ♠g4 ♠d5 16 ♠e1

White has an important alternative here in 16 ♠f4. After 16...♠ad8 (inferior is 16...♠xe5 17 ♠g3 ♠c4 18 b3 ♠d6 19 ♠ad1, which allowed White an initiative in the rook ending after 19...♠c5 20 ♠xd6 cxd6 21 ♠xd6 ♠xd6 22 ♠xd6 ♠ac8 23 ♠xa6 in Vogt-Chekhov, Potsdam 1985) 17 h4 (not 17 ♠ad1 ♠xe5 18 ♠e2 ♠c4 19 ♠xc4 ♠xc4 20 ♠xc7 ♠xd1 21 ♠xd1 ♠xb2 and now it is Black who has the extra pawn) 17...♠xe5 18 ♠g3 ♠f5, as in Subit-A.Rodriguez, Cuban Championship 1990, Black has managed to hold on to his extra pawn for the moment, but White will obtain adequate compensation by doubling on the e-file.

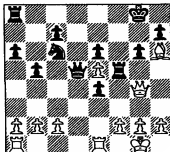
16...♠f5

The pawn grab 16...♠d4? 17 ♠h6 ♠xc2 18 ♠ad1 loses the initiative.

17 ♠h6

After 17 ♠xe4? ♠af8, as in Hazai-

Chekhov, Bulgaria 1985, White has a problem with the f2-square. Black shouldn't be allowed to double on the f-file.



17...♠c5

If 17...♠d4 18 ♠e2 ♠xb2 19 ♠xe4 ♠c3, Krasenkov proposes 20 f4 with an edge to White. However, after 17...♠xe5! 18 ♠xe4 ♠d8 19 ♠f4 ♠xe4 20 ♠xe4 ♠c4 21 ♠xc7 ♠c8 22 ♠g3 ♠xb2 23 ♠xe6 a5 24 ♠a6 a draw was agreed in Chandler-Beckemeier, Germany 1990/91.

18 ♠e2 ♠d8

18...♠d4 19 ♠xe4 ♠b3 20 ♠f1 (Geller and Gufeld) leaves Black with no compensation for the pawn.

19 h4

A useful move with ideas of h4-h5 or ♠h6-g5 depending on circumstances and, of course, giving his king a bolt hole.

19...♠d5 20 ♠f1

Black can of course take the e-pawn off with 20...♠bx5, but after 21 ♠xe4 ♠xc2 22 ♠xe5 ♠xe5 23 ♠d4 ♠d3 24 ♠a7 Black's king is a major cause for concern.

20...♠d4 21 b3 ♠c3

The best bet was a slightly worse ending after 21...♠xe5 22 ♠xe4 ♠xe4 23 ♠xe4 ♠f7, when the e-pawn is isolated and the bishop will probably prove to be the stronger minor piece.

22 h5! ♠e5 23 ♠xe4 ♠xh5 24 ♠f4

As soon as the e-pawn falls the bishop leaps into life and the e-file becomes a

problem for Black.

24...♞d4??

A blunder. After 24...♞f5 25 ♞fe1 c5! Black is just about hanging on. White's best may then be 26 ♟xe5 (26 ♟g3 with ideas of ♞e3 and f2-f4 is interesting, but 26 ♞e3 ♟b2 27 c4? fails to 27...♞d4) 26...♞fxe5 27 ♟xe5 ♞xe5 28 ♞xe5 ♟xc2 29 ♞5e2 ♟c3 30 ♞xe6 with an edge.

25 ♟a8+ ♟g7 26 ♟xe5+ 1-0

Despite the result of this game, 9...♟e7 is a safe practical move which avoids the long theoretical lines of 9...♟c5.

Game 67
Van Mil-Flear
Oakham 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♟c6 3 ♟b5 a6 4 ♟a4 ♟f6
5 0-0 ♟xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♟b3 d5 8 dxe5
♟e6 9 ♟bd2 ♟c5

Aiming for transposition to Part One after 10 c3.

White usually goes for mass simplification here, when he obtains the slightly better pawn structure and thus a faint and fairly risk-free edge.

10 ♟e4

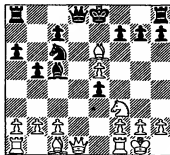
10 ♟e2 is examined in Chapter 9, Game 60, note to White's tenth move, while White also has some lesser tries:

a) The inclusion of the extra moves 10 a4 b4 gives White potential access to the c4-square. However, this proved to be unimportant in the game *Milos-Flear*, Las Palmas 1993: 11 ♟xe4 dxe4 12 ♟xe6 ♟xd1 13 ♞xd1 fxe6 14 ♟g5 0-0 15 ♟xe4 ♟d4! 16 c3 bxc3 17 bxc3 ♟b6 18 ♟f1 ♞f5 19 ♟e2 ♞xe5 20 f3 ♞d5 with equality.

b) 10 ♟e1! is an idea of the German Thomas Luther. After 10...♟xd2 11 ♟xd2 ♟g4 12 ♟e3 ♟e7 13 ♟d1 ♟xe5 14 ♟xd5 0-0? 15 h3 (taking the exchange is risky) 15...♟xf3+ 16 ♟xf3 ♟xd1 17 ♟xd1 ♟xd1 18 ♞fxd1, the game *Luther-Flear*, Lenk 1992, was agreed drawn.

10...dxe4 11 ♟xe6

The immediate 11 ♟g5! is fashionable, when White keeps a faint edge after 11...♟xd1 12 ♞xd1 ♟xb3 (12...0-0! 13 ♟xe6 fxe6 13 ♟xe6+ ♟h8, as in *Gross-Sulskis*, Budapest 1998, may be worth investigating) 13 axb3 0-0 14 ♟xe4 ♟d4 (14...♟b6 15 ♟f4 ♞fe8 16 ♟c3 ♟d4 17 ♞d2 ♟e6 18 ♟e3! left Black with an uphill struggle in *Khalifman-Golod*, Belgrade 1999) 15 e6 fxe6 16 ♟f1 ♟b6 17 c3 a5 18 f3 a4 19 bxa4 bxa4 20 ♟g5, as in *De Vreugt-Mikhalevski*, Dieren 1999.



11...♟xd1

Also playable is 11...fxe6 12 ♟xd8+ (keeping the queens on with 12 ♟d2 ♟d5 13 ♟h5+ g6 14 ♟h4 e3 15 ♟e4 ♟e7 16 ♟f6+ ♟xf6 17 exf6 e2 18 ♞e1 ♟d4 19 f7+ ♟xd7 20 ♟f4+ ♟g8 21 ♟xc7 was unclear in *Marjanovic-Torre*, Novi Sad 1984) 12...♞xd8 13 ♟g5 ♟b6 14 ♟xe6 ♞d7 15 ♟g5 ♟xe5 16 ♟xe4 0-0 17 ♟d2 ♟c4 18 ♟c3, as in *Vladimirov-Lopez*, St Barbara 1992, when Black regains the pawn by 18...♞e7 19 ♞ac1 ♞fe8. In fact, Black can also play 13...0-0 14 ♟e3 (14 ♟xe6? ♟xf2+ 15 ♟h1 e3 looks great for Black) 14...♟xe3 15 fxe3 ♞e8 with comfortable equality in *Kwiatkowski-Flear*, England 1992.

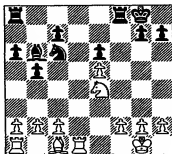
12 ♞xd1

Not 12 ♟xf7+?! ♟xd7 13 ♟g5+ ♟g6 14 ♞xd1 because of 14...e3!

12...fxe6 13 ♟g5 0-0 14 ♟xe4

14 ♖e3 proved to be nothing special after 14...♗e3 15 fxe3 ♖xe5 16 ♖xe6 ♣f7 17 b3 ♖g4 18 ♖e1 ♖e8 in Prasad-Krasenkov, Gausdal 1991.

14...♗b6



This position received a lot of attention a few years ago, but experience has shown that Black seems to have an equal game. White cannot maintain the extra pawn and Black is active enough to compensate his slightly worse pawn structure. The main drawback is that it's all a little dull and Black has difficulty creating any winning chances.

15 b3

A sensible move, protecting the c4-square and preparing the bishop's development to b2 or a3. Other possibilities include:

a) 15 ♖f1 h6! (15...♣f5 16 f3 ♣af8 17 c3 ♖xe5 18 ♖e2, as in Doggers-Ernst, Dieren 1999, or 17...♣xe5 18 ♖e1 leaves White with chances of consolidating his better pawn structure) 16 c3 ♖xe5 17 ♖e2 ♣ad8 18 ♣xd8 ♣xd8 19 b3 ♖f7 20 f3 ♣d5 with reasonable counter-chances in Zontakh-Skembris, Cutro 1999.

b) 15 g3 ♣f5 16 c3 ♖xe5 17 ♖g2 ♣af8 18 f4 ♖g6 19 ♖g5 ♣f6 20 ♖e1 e5 and Black had enough activity in Glek-Korneev, Krumbach 1991.

c) 15 a4 ♖xe5 16 h3 ♖c4 17 ♖e1 ♣ac8 18 ♖f1 ♖d6 and Black started to assume the initiative in Grünfeld-Mikhalevski, Tel Aviv 1994.

15...♖xe5

Alternatively, 15...♣f5 16 ♗b2 ♣f4 17 ♖e1 ♣af8 18 ♖e2 ♗d4 offers Black satisfactory counterplay, when 19 c3 ♗b6 20 ♗c1 ♣xe4 21 ♣xe4 ♣xf2 22 ♗e3 ♖e2 even gave Black an edge in Beudaert-Flear, Creon 1999.

16 ♗a3

This stops the doubling of rooks.

16...♣f4 17 ♖e1 ♣d8 18 ♖e2 ♖c6 19 c3 e5?!

A poor strategic decision as Black will inevitably have a passive game after this. Instead 19...a5 looks unconvincing after 20 ♖g5 but 19...♣d5! (covering c5 and g5) 20 ♣ae1 ♖e5!, heading for d3, gives Black good play.

20 ♣ae1 h6 21 ♗c1 ♣f7 22 ♣d2 ♣fd7?

A tactical oversight which leaves Black in trouble. Better was 22...♣xd2 23 ♗xd2 ♖f8 with a passive but playable game, as 24 ♗e3 ♣d7! holds everything together, despite Black's poor pawn worst structure.

23 ♣xd7 ♣xd7 24 ♗xh6!

Whoops! Where did that one come from? Black can save the pawn at the risk of allowing the white king a dominating role.

24...♗xf2+

Not 24...gxf6?? because of 25 ♖f6+.

25 ♖xf2 ♣f7+ 26 ♖e3 gxf6 27 ♣d1

Now it is White who has the d-file.

27...b4 28 ♣d5! bxc3 29 ♖xc3

Comparing pawns, Black's are all isolated whereas White's are neat and tidy. Black must therefore get active or die.

29...♣f1 30 ♣e5 ♖b4 31 ♣xc7

Simplest was 31 ♣xe5 ♖e1+ 32 ♖e2 ♖xa2 33 ♣e8+ ♖f7 34 ♣c8 ♖b4 35 ♣xc7+.

31...♖e1+ 32 ♖f2

My opponent rejected 32 ♖f3! because of 32...♣c1 33 ♖d5 ♣f1+ 34 ♖e2 ♖xd5 and Black escapes. But in this line 33 a3! is very strong as after 33...♖c2 34 ♖e4 the white king invades with a decisive effect.

32...♖d3+ 33 ♖g3 ♖f4 34 ♖f3 ♣f1+ 35 ♖e4 ♖e1+ 36 ♖f3 ♣f1+ 37 ♖e4 ♖e1+ 38

♠f5 ♖xg2 39 ♚e4

Perhaps 39 ♚d5!? could have been tried.

39...♞e2 40 ♚f6+ ♠f8

White cannot easily deliver mate as both 41 ♠e6 or 41 ♠g6 are met by 41...♚f4+.

41 a4 e4! 42 ♚xe4 ♖h4+ 43 ♠e5 ♚f3+ 44 ♠d5 ♙xh2 45 b4 ♙h5+ 46 ♠d6 ♙h4 47 ♙c3 ♚xe4 48 ♙xf3+ ♠g7 49 ♙b3 ♠f6 50 b5 axb5 51 axb5 ♙e6+ 52 ♠d7 ♙e7+ 53 ♠d8 ♙h7! 54 b6 h5 55 b7 h4 56 b8 ♙ ♙h8+ 57 ♠d7 ♙xb8 58 ♙xb8 ♠f5 59 ♠d6 h3 60 ♙b4 ♠g5 61 ♠e5 ½-½

A thoroughly frustrating experience for my opponent, who needed to win for a Grandmaster norm.

Game 68
Tischbierek-Pähtz
Potsdam 1985

1 e4 e5 2 ♚f3 ♚c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙e4 ♚f6 5 0-0 b5 6 ♙b3 ♚xe4 7 d4 d5 8 dxe5 ♙e6 9 ♚bd2 ♚c5 10 c3 ♚xb3

This line has never gained much popularity despite being judged as equal by the books.

Korchnoi was punished emphatically by Karpov after trying the experimental 10...g6?! 11 ♙e2 ♙g7 12 ♚d4 ♚xe5?! (playable but uninspiring is 12...♚xd4 13 cxd4 ♚b7 14 ♙c2 c5 15 f4 cxd4 16 ♚b3 ♙b6 17 ♙f2 0-0 18 ♚xd4 with a pleasant edge for White in Fishbein-Murey, Moscow 1989) 13 f4 ♚c4 14 f5 gxf5 15 ♚xf5 ♙g8 16 ♚xc4 dxc4 17 ♙c2 ♚d3 18 ♙h6 ♙f8 19 ♙ad1 and Black was in all sorts of trouble in Karpov-Korchnoi, Baguio City (8th matchgame) 1978.

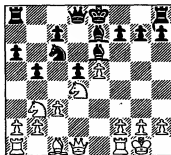
I quite like 10...♙d7?! 11 ♚d4 ♚xd4 (11...♚xe5 is too risky after 12 f4 ♚c6 13 f5 with attacking chances for White in Adams-Ziatdinov, Dublin 1991) 12 cxd4 ♚a4! 13 ♙xa4 bxa4 14 b3 c5 when Black had equalised in Guid-Sundararajan, Yerevan 1999.

The alternatives 10...♙g4 and 10...d4 are

considered in Game 69 and Games 70-76 respectively.

11 ♚xb3 ♙e7 12 ♚fd4

The alternative 12 ♙e3 can be met by 12...♙g4, when 13 ♙c5 ♚xe5! 14 ♙xe7 ♙xc7 15 ♙e1 ♙xf3 16 gxf3 ♙g5+ 17 ♚h1 0-0 yields equality for Black - Korchnoi.



12...♙d7

Another sound idea is 12...♚xd4 13 cxd4 0-0 14 ♙d2 f6! (another typical method to liberate the black position) 15 ♙e1 fxe5 16 ♙xe5 ♙d6?! (optimistic, instead 16...♙f7 followed by ...♙d6 is satisfactory) 17 ♙g5 (after 17 ♙xe6! ♙xh2+ 18 ♠f1! ♙xf2+ 19 ♠xf2 ♙h4+ 20 ♠e3 ♙f4+ 21 ♠d3 ♙f5+ 22 ♠c3 Black doesn't really have enough compensation) 17...♙e8 18 ♙e3 ♙g6 19 ♙c2 ♙xg5 20 ♙xe6 ♙h4 21 g3 ♙h3 22 ♙e1 h5 and here a draw was agreed in Henao-Obando, Los Angeles 1991.

However, 12...♚xe5? is a mistake as after 13 ♙e1 ♚g6 14 ♚xe6 fxe6 15 ♚d4! ♚f8 16 ♙g4, as in G.Kuzmin-Beliavsky, USSR 1977, White was obviously much better.

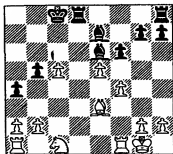
13 f4 ♚xd4 14 cxd4 a5 15 ♙e3 a4 16 ♚c1

After 16 ♚c5 ♙xc5 17 dxc5 Black has a light-squared blockade and can play for more with 17...♙f5 (with ideas of ...h7-h5, ...♙e4, ...♙f5 and bringing a rook to g6). Instead 17...h5? was disastrous for Black in Bejaoui-Flear, Tunis 1999, after 18 c6! ♙xc6 19 f5 with a raging attack for White.

16...c5!

Introducing a double-pawn sacrifice to obtain good play for the bishops.

17 dxc5 d4 18 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 19 ♕xd4 0-0-0 20 ♕e3 f6



Black has great play for his pieces despite the two-pawn deficit.

21 b3 fxe5 22 f5

Returning a pawn, with gain of time, to obtain a kingside majority. Note that Black remains particularly active after 22 fxe5 ♕d5 23 b4 ♕hd8 24 ♕f4 ♕d4.

22...♕f7 23 bxa4 bxa4 24 ♕b1 ♖c7 25 ♕b4 ♕e8 26 g4 h6 27 ♖f2 ♕c6 28 ♖g3 ♕d5 29 ♕e1 ♕hd8 30 h4 ♕xc5

Finally winning back the sacrificed material, after which the game is equal.

31 ♕c4 ♕d4 32 g5 hxg5 33 ♕xg5 ♕8d6 34 ♖d3 ♕c3 35 ♕xc3 ½-½

Indeed 35...♕xd3+ 36 ♕xd3 ♕xd3+ 37 ♕c3 ♕xc3+ 38 ♕xe3 is dead drawn.

Game 69
Lutz-Yusupov
Germany 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♕b5 a6 4 ♕a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♕b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♕e6 9 ♖bd2 ♖c5 10 c3 ♕g4

This opening is similar to the manoeuvring lines of Chapter 5. However, here Black aims to develop his bishop to c5 in one go, that is after having played ...♕c8-

e6-g4 and ...♖e4-c5-e6. If White plays too routinely then the black set-up is fine, but unfortunately this plan takes too much time and White can retain the initiative, as we shall see below.

11 ♕c2

White should at some point retreat his bishop as otherwise he fails to maintain any pressure, e.g. 11 ♕e1 ♖d7 12 ♖f1 ♖xb3! 13 axb3 ♕e7 14 h3 ♕e6 15 ♕g5 ♕xg5 16 ♖g5 0-0 with a comfortable game for Black in Das-Sriram, Calcutta 1999.

11...♖e6

Quick central development was seen in A.Rodriguez-Kharitonov, Bayamo 1989: 11...♖d7 12 ♕e1 ♕d8 13 ♖b3 ♖e6 14 a4 ♕e7 15 axb5 axb5 16 ♖d3. The plan of an early ...♖d7 and ...♕d8 sometimes leaves the b5-pawn exposed and now ...0-0 will be hard to achieve.

Leko-Anand, Linares 1999, varied from this with 12...d4! 13 ♖b3 dxc3 14 ♖xd7+ ♕xd7 15 bxc3 ♖d8 16 ♖g5 h6 17 ♖e4 ♖xe4 18 ♕xe4 ♕c6 and Black had a reasonable game.

12 ♕e1 ♕c5 13 ♖b3

Also effective is 13 a4 ♕b8 (13...b4! is a better try) 14 axb5 axb5 15 ♖b3 with an edge for White – A.Rodriguez.

13...♕a7!

This is better than 13...♕b6 14 a4 ♖e7 15 axb5 axb5 16 ♕xa8 ♕xa8 17 ♖d3 c6 18 ♖fd4 ♖xd4 19 ♖xd4 ♖c8 20 ♕g5 h6 21 ♕xe7 ♖xe7 22 ♖g3, which was distinctly unpleasant for Black in Sax-Flear, French Team Championship 1990.

14 a4 b4 15 ♖d3 ♕h5

In order to play ...♕g6 followed by ...0-0. 16 ♖fd4!

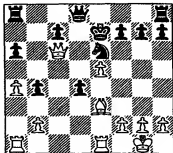
An enterprising pawn sacrifice.

16...♕xd4 17 cxd4 ♕g6 18 ♖d1 ♕xc2 19 ♖xc2 ♖cxd4

Black does best to take the pawn as otherwise White follows up with ♕e3 and ♕c1 to pressurise the c-file.

20 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 21 ♖c5 ♖e6 22 ♖c6+

22 ♖xb4 wins back the pawn but after 22...c5 Black will then castle and operate down the b-file with excellent play. 22...♙e7 23 ♔e3 d4



Stopping the bishop from coming to c5, which would create problems after 23...♗d7 24 ♔c5+ ♕xc5 25 ♖xc5+ ♙e8 since Black's rooks are disconnected.

24 ♔xd4! ♕xd4

Not 24...♗xd4? as 25 ♔ad1 ♖c5 26 ♔d7+ ♙e8 27 ♖xa8+ wins.

25 ♖c5+ ♙e6 26 ♔ad1 ♗d5

In this way the queens are exchanged. White has the more active rooks but the centralised king is now a positive feature.

27 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 28 ♔xd4 ♔hd8!?

This activating pawn sacrifice was preferred by Yusupov to 28...c5 29 ♔d6+ ♙e7 30 ♔ed1 ♔hd8 31 ♙f1 when White has a bind.

29 ♔xb4 ♔ab8 30 ♔c4 ♔xb2 31 ♔c6+ ♙e7 32 ♔xc7+ ♔d7 33 ♔c6 ♔dd2 34 ♔f1 ♔a2 35 ♔xa6 ♔d4 36 g3 ♔axa4

For club players, the ending of rook and four pawns against rook and three on the same side is notoriously difficult to defend. But for players as technically proficient as Yusupov the defence is not a major task.

37 ♔b6 ♔ab4 38 ♔a6 ♔a4 39 ♔xa4 ♔xa4 40 ♙g2 ♔a2 41 ♙h3 f6 42 exf6+ ♙xf6

Rook and three versus rook and two is even easier to defend!

43 f3 h5 44 ♔b1 ♔f2 45 ♔b6+ ♙f7 46 f4

g6 47 ♙h4 ♔xh2+ 48 ♙g5 ♔g2 49 ♔b7+ ♙g8 50 ♔b3 ♙g7 51 ♔a3 ♔g1 52 ♔a7+ ♙g8 53 ♙xg6 ♔xg3+ 54 ♙xh5 ½-½

Game 70

Kasparov-Anand

New York (10th matchgame) 1995

This is one of the most famous Open Ruy Lopez games of all time.

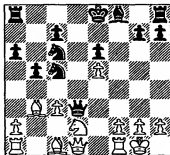
1 e4 e5 2 ♕f3 ♕c6 3 ♔b5 a6 4 ♔a4 ♕f6 5 0-0 ♕xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♔b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♔e6 9 ♕bd2 ♕c5 10 c3 d4 11 ♕g5!?

A seemingly crazy move that Karpov managed to unleash on Korchnoi in their 1978 Baguio City match. Accepting the sacrifice with 11...♖xg5 is possible (Game 72) and Black can also safely decline it (Game 71). Here Kasparov launches a home-prepared attack which kills off the defence inaugurated by Black's previously well regarded 11th move,

11...dxc3?!

White also retains the better game after 11...♕xb3 12 ♕xe6 fxe6 13 ♖xb3 (or even 13 axb3 d3 14 ♖h5+ g6 15 ♖f3 ♕xe5 16 ♖e4 ♔g7 17 f4 ♕d7 18 ♔f3!, winning back the pawn with interest in M.Gonzalez-Rodriguez, Spain 1999) 13...♗d5 14 ♖xd5 exd5 15 ♕f3 dxc3 16 bxc3, as in Angantytsson-Pokojojczyk, Copenhagen 1980.

12 ♕xe6 fxe6 13 bxc3 ♗d3



In their sixth matchgame Kasparov was

held in this line by Anand, but by the tenth game was ready with the plan of exchanging the c5-knight so that the defences around the black king are weakened. In fact, the attack is so strong that White can even sacrifice his queen's rook!

14 Qc2!

Kasparov's new sacrificial idea. Previously theory had continued 14 $\text{Qf3 Wxd1 15 Qxd1 Qe7 16 Qe3 Qd3 17 Qb3 Qf7 18 Qad1 Qdxe5 19 Qxe5+}$ (even better is 19 Qg5+ Qxg5 20 Qxg5 which is clearly better for White - Korchnoi) 19... Qxe5 20 Qf4 Qc4 Karpov-Korchnoi, Baguio City (10th matchgame) 1978, and now Tal's 21 Qd7 yields White an edge.

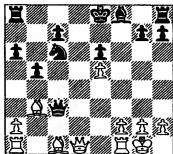
This was the state of affairs until the sixth game when 14...0-0-0 (instead of 14... $\text{Wxd1 15 Qe1 Qxb3 16 axb3 Qb7 17 Qe3 Qe7}$ Kasparov-Anand, New York (6th matchgame) 1995, proved to be about equal.

All this is just for the record as the text is much stronger.

14... Wxc3 15 Qb3! Qxb3

A later try to rescue the variation was 15... Qd8 16 Qd2 Qxd2 (or 16... $\text{Wxe5 17 Qc1 Qd5 18 Wg4}$ and the black monarch is in mortal danger) 17 $\text{Qxd2 Qxe5 18 Qb3 Qed7 19 Qd4 Qd6 20 Qc1}$, but Black's king never found a safe haven in Khalifman-Hracek, Pärnu 1996.

16 Qxb3

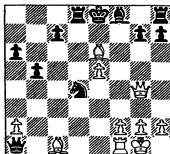


16... Qd4

White has a raging attack after both 16... $\text{Qd8 17 Wh5+ g6 18 Wg4 Wxe5 19 Qb2}$ and 16... $\text{Wxa1 17 Wh5+ g6 18 Wf3}$.

17 $\text{Wg4 Wxa1 18 Qxe6 Qd8}$

Another defensive try is 18... Wc3 but White then wins material by 19 $\text{Qd7+ Qd8 20 Qg5+ Qe7 21 Qxe7+ Qxe7 22 Wxg7+ Qd8 23 Qxh8+ Qxd7 24 Wxa8}$.



19 Qh6!

Black escapes after 19 $\text{Qg5?! Wc3 20 Qxd8 h5 21 Wg6+ Qxd8}$.

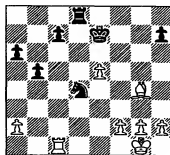
19... Wc3 20 Qxg7

White threatens mate starting with 21 Wh5+ .

20... Qd3 21 Qxh8 Wg6

21... $\text{Qc2+ 22 Qh1 Qg3+ 23 hxg3 Wxf1+ 24 Qh2 Qd3 25 Qf5 Wc4 26 f4}$ leaves Black an exchange up but a king down.

22 $\text{Qf6 Qe7 23 Qxe7 Wxg4 24 Qxg4 Qxe7 25 Qc1}$



After the vicious attack comes the slow torture of a lost ending. White has an extra pawn and his problems on the c-file mean that Black cannot activate his pieces.

25...c6 26 f4 a5 27 ♖f2 a4 28 ♕e3 b4 29 ♔d1!

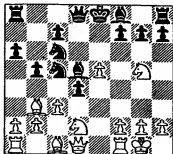
White sensibly keeps an eye on the queenside before Black gets any further advanced.

29...a3 30 g4 ♔d5 31 ♚c4 c5 32 ♕e4 ♔d8 33 ♚xc5 ♕e6 34 ♔d5 ♚c8 35 f5 ♚c4+ 36 ♕e3 ♕c5 37 g5 ♚c1 38 ♔d6 1-0

Game 71
Onischuk-I.Sokolov
Wijk aan Zee 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♕c6 3 ♔b5 a6 4 ♔a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♕xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♔b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♔e6 9 ♖bd2 ♕c5 10 c3 d4 11 ♖g5 ♔d5!

The best way to refuse the knight.



12 ♔xd5

A critical alternative is the enterprising piece sacrifice 12 ♕xf7? ♖xf7 13 ♚f3+ ♕e6 14 ♕e4 ♕xe4 (not 14...♕xb3?! 15 ♚g4+ ♖f7 16 ♚f5+ ♕e8? 17 e6 ♔xe6 18 ♚xe6+ ♕e7 19 ♚xb3 and White had a clear advantage in Dominguez-Rios, Cuba 1996; better was 16...♖g8) 15 ♚xe4 ♕e7 16 f4 g6 (less good is 16...♔xb3 17 f5+ ♖f7 18 axb3 ♚d5 19 ♚f4 when White has compensation

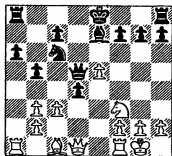
- Herrera and Dominguez) 17 g4 ♚g8 18 f5+ gx f5 19 ♚xf5 ♔g7! and Black should be able to beat off the attack (Flear).

Instead of 14 ♕e4 White successfully tried 14 ♚g4+ in Svidler-Anand, Dos Hermanas 1999, when 14...♕e7 15 e6 ♔xe6! 16 ♔e1 ♚d7 17 ♔xe6 ♕xe6 18 ♖f3 ♔e8 19 ♖g5 ♕d8 20 ♔d2 h6?! 21 ♖f3 ♚d5 22 ♔e5 ♚d6 23 cxd4 gave White more than enough compensation. This attack is far from convincing, however, as Black has two clear improvements: first 15...♕xb3 (instead of 15...♔xe6) 16 ♕xb3 ♔xe6 17 ♔e1 ♚d5 18 ♕c5 ♕d8 19 cxd4 h6 20 ♔f4 with compensation for White (Se.Ivanov); and later 20...♚d5! (instead of 20...h6) intending 21...♖d7, when White's best is 21 ♕xe6 ♕xe6 22 ♚xe6+ ♚xe6 23 ♔e1 ♚xe1+ 24 ♔xe1 dxc3 25 ♔xc3 ♖d8 and Black is okay (Flear).

12...♚xd5 13 ♕b3 ♕xb3

I.Sokolov points out why 13...♔d8 is bad: 14 ♕xc5 ♔xc5 15 e6! fxe6 16 ♕xe6!

14 axb3 ♔e7 15 ♖f3



15...d3!

This seems to equalise completely and improves on 15...♕xe5 16 ♕xd4 ♖g6 17 ♚f3 ♚xf3 18 ♕xf3 which gave White a safe edge in Anand-I.Sokolov, Lyon 1994.

16 ♔e3 0-0 17 ♔d4 ♔f8 18 ♚xd3

An admission that White has nothing, but he has little choice in view of Sokolov's line 18 ♔e1? ♕xd4 19 cxd4 ♔b4 20 ♔c3 d2 21

♠d3 c5 22 ♘xd2 c4.

18... ♗xb3 19 ♖e2 ♖e6 20 ♠fd1 ♠d5 21 h3 a5

Freeing his queen's rook.

22 ♖e3 ♠ad8 23 ♠xd5 ♗xd5 24 ♖f4 ♗d3 25 ♗xd3 ♠xd3 26 ♖f1

White probably should have forced the continuation 26 e6 fxe6 27 ♖xc7 a4 28 c4 bxc4 29 ♠xa4 c3 which was of course equal.

26... h6 27 ♖e2 ♠d5 28 h4 a4 29 e6 fxe6 30 ♖xc7 ♖f6 31 c4 ♘d4+ 32 ♘xd4 ♠xd4 33 cxb5 ♠b4 34 b6

A more comfortable way to draw was 34 ♠a2 ♖xb2 35 ♖d6 ♠xb5 36 ♠xa4.

34... ♠xb2+ 35 ♖f1 ♠b4 36 ♠xa4 ♠xa4 37 b7 ♠b4 38 b8♖+ ♠xb8 39 ♖xb8 ♖xh4

The ending should be a draw especially as the h-pawn is the notorious 'wrong rook's pawn'.

40 ♖e2 ♖f7 41 ♖e3 ♖g6 42 g3 ♖f6 43 ♖e4 h5 44 f4 ♖c3 45 ♖e5 ♖e1 46 ♖f3 ♖f7 47 ♖d4 g6 48 ♖b2 ♖e7 49 ♖e5 ♖d7 50 ♖f6 ♖d6 51 ♖e5+ ♖d5 52 ♖f6 ♖c4 53 g4 ♖d5 54 gxh5 gxh5 55 ♖e7 h4 56 ♖g4 ♖e4 57 ♖g5 h3 58 ♖xh3 ♖f3 59 ♖f6 ♖g3 60 ♖g7 ♖xf4 61 ♖f6 e5 62 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 ½-½

Game 72
Shirov-Timman
Wijk aan Zee 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♖e6 9 ♘bd2 ♘c5 10 c3 d4 11 ♘g5 ♗xg5 12 ♗f3

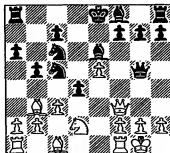
see following diagram

12...0-0-0!

12... ♖d7 is inferior as Black cannot hang on to the piece and has to give it back under worse circumstances: 13 ♖xf7+ ♖e7 14 ♖d5 ♘xe5 15 ♖e2 d3 16 ♖e1 c6 (16... ♠e8 is regarded as the lesser evil by Korchnoi, e.g. 17 f4 ♗h5 18 fxe5 ♖d8 19 ♖f7 ♗xe5 20

♖xe8 ♗xe1 21 ♠xe1 ♖xe8 22 ♘f3 with some compensation for the exchange but White is still favourite) 17 f4 ♗h6 18 ♖f3 ♖d8 19 fxe5 ♖e7 20 ♘b3 with a strong initiative for White in Wolff-Flear, London 1990.

There is another idea, 12... ♖d7, but this leads to a better ending for White after 13 ♖d5 ♖xd5 14 ♗xd5+ ♖d6 15 ♘c4 (or 15 cxd4 ♘xd4 16 ♘c4, as in Brøndum-Brinck Clausen, Denmark 1979) 15... ♗g6 (15... ♗f5? 16 ♘b6+! - Stean) 16 exd6 ♖e6 17 ♗xc5 ♗xc4 18 ♗xc4 bxc4 19 dxc7 ♖xc7.



13 ♖xe6+

13 ♗xc6 leads to equality after 13... ♗xe5 14 ♘f3 ♗d5! (a novel way to exchange queens) 15 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 16 ♘xd4 ♖xc6 17 ♘xc6 ♠e8 (Stean).

13... fxe6 14 ♗xc6 ♗xe5 15 b4

After 15 ♘f3 ♗d5 16 ♗xd5 exd5 17 cxd4 ♘e4 the position is more or less equal.

15... ♗d5

15... dxc3 16 bxc5 cxd2 17 ♗xa6+ ♖d7 18 ♖xd2 is clearly better for White (Korchnoi) as Black's king is a problem.

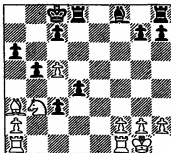
Instead, the text exchanges queens and sacrifices a piece for a powerful pawn phalanx in the centre.

16 ♗xd5 exd5 17 bxc5 dxc3 18 ♘b3 d4 19 ♖a3

A fairly recent try is 19 ♠d1 d3 20 ♖e3 ♖e7 21 ♖d4 ♠xd4 22 ♘xd4 ♖f6 23 ♠xd3 ♠d8, as in Gufeld-Ja.Torres, Los Angeles

1995, which is given by ECO as 'with sufficient compensation' but after 24 ♖f1 White may be better. I suggest 20...d2 as a possible improvement.

However, after 19 a4?! b4 20 a5 d3 Black had great compensation in Gi.Garcia-Timmermans, Moscow 1999.



19...g6!

Timman's improvement over one of his own games from 17 years ago (what a memory he must have!) where he had White! That game continued 19...♗e7 20 ♖b4 ♗f6 21 a4 ♘d7 22 axb5 axb5 23 ♖a6 c6 24 ♖d1 ♗e6 25 ♖xc6+ ♘d5 26 ♖xf6 ♗c4 and things were still unclear in Timman-Smyslov, West Germany 1979.

Instead of 21...♘d7, worthy of note was 21...bxa4 22 c6 d3 23 ♖xa4 d2 24 ♖xa6 ♗b8 25 ♘xd2 cxd2 26 ♖d1 ♖he8 27 ♗f1 ♖e1+ 28 ♖xe1 dxe1 ♖+ 29 ♗xe1 ♖e8+ 30 ♗f1 ♗d4 with just about enough compensation for the pawn in N.Ninov-K.Dimov, correspondence 1995.

20 ♖b4 ♗g7 21 a4 ♘d7 22 axb5 axb5 23 ♖ad1

The main point of having his bishop on g7, rather than f6, is that 23 ♖a6 can be met by 23...♖a8, whereas in the original Timman-Smyslov game (see the previous note) 23...♖a8 would have been met by 24 ♖xf6 gxf6 25 ♘xd4 with advantage.

However, a recent game looks important. Van den Doel-Timmermans, Netherlands

1999, continued 23 ♖fd1! ♗e6 24 ♖ac1 (this way White stops the king coming to d5 due to the pin on the c-pawn) 24...♖d5 25 ♗a5 ♖a8 26 ♖d3, when the pawns are stymied and White went on to win.

23...♗e6 24 ♖fe1+

A curious alternative is 24 ♖d3 ♘d5 25 ♗xc3 ♗c4 (a family fork!) 26 ♖fd1 dxc3 27 ♘a5+ ♗xc5 28 ♘b7+ ♗c4 29 ♘a5+ ♗b4 30 ♘c6+ ♗c4 31 ♘a5+ (Shirov) with a strange perpetual check which neither side dare avoid.

24...♘d5 25 ♗xc3

25 ♘a5 c2 26 ♖d2 c1 ♖ 27 ♖xc1 ♗h6 is equally unclear (Shirov).

25...♗c4 26 ♗a5 ♗xb3 27 ♖b1+ ♗c4 28 ♖ec1+ ♘d5 29 c6 ♘d6 30 ♖xb5 ♖b8 31 ♖b4+ ♗e6 32 ♖e1+ ♗f6 33 ♗e7+ ♗f7 34 ♖d5 ♖hc8?!

Up to here Black has played well, but the text is inferior to 34...♖he8 35 ♖d7 ♗g8 36 ♗f1 (36 ♖xc7?! ♖bc8 37 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 38 ♖c1 ♗h6 - Flear) 36...d3 37 ♖xd3 ♖b6 with equality (Shirov).

35 ♖d7 ♗g8 36 g3 ♖b6 37 ♖c1 ♖b3 38 ♗c5 d3?

Not 38...♖c3?? because of 39 ♖xg7+, but 38...♗h6 (Shirov) would still have put up a fight.

39 ♖d1 ♖cb8 40 ♗g2

Black will lose the d-pawn and the game will be over.

40...♗f8 41 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 42 ♖1xd3 ♖xd3 43 ♖xd3 ♖f7 44 f4 ♖e7 45 g4 ♖e6 46 ♖d8+ ♗f7 47 ♖d7+ ♖e7 48 ♖xe7+ ♗xe7 49 g5! 1-0

Black resigned because of the continuation 49...♘d6 50 h4 ♗xc6 51 f5 gxf5 52 h5 ♘d6 53 g6 hxg6 54 h6.

Game 73
Chandler-Yusupov
Hastings 1989/90

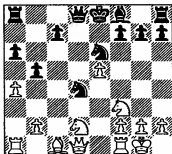
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5

♙e6 9 Qbd2 Qc5 10 c3 d4 11 ♙xe6
Qxe6 12 cxd4

12 a4 was well defended by 12...dxc3 13 bxc3 b4 14 cxb4 Qxb4 15 ♙a3 ♖d5 16 ♚b1 a5 17 Qb3 ♙e7 18 ♖d2 ♖c6 19 Qxa5 ♙xa5 20 ♙xb4 ♖a8! in Romanishin-Marin, Dresden 1988, when White had nothing better than 21 ♚b3 ♙xa3 22 ♙xa3 ♙xa4 and a draw was on the cards.

12...Qcxd4 13 a4

13 Qe4 is the most popular move here (see Games 74-76), while 14 ♖f3 (14 ♖c2 is best met by 14...♖d5) 14...♙d8 15 ♖c6+ ♖d7 16 ♙xa6 (a draw was agreed after 16 ♖xd7+ in Rogers-Anand, Thessaloniki Olympiad 1988, as the ending is totally equal) doesn't win a pawn for long as after 16...♖d5, as in Cicak-Beckemeier, West Germany 1988, the dual threats of 17...♙a8 and 17...♖xe5 win the pawn back comfortably.



13...♙e7

There has also been interest in two alternative defences:

a) 13...♚b8 14 axb5 axb5 15 Qe4 ♙e7 16 ♙e3!? (originally Korchnoi's suggestion and improving on the dullish equality resulting from 16 Qd6+ cxd6 17 Qxd4 Qxd4 18 ♖xd4 dxe5 19 ♖xe5 0-0 in Nunn-Timman, Amsterdam 1985) 16...Qf5 17 ♙a7 ♖xd1 18 ♙fxd1 ♙d8 19 g4 ♙xd1+ 20 ♙xd1 Qh4 21 Qxh4 ♙xh4 22 ♙e3, as in Smirin-Hübner,

Polanica Zdroj 1995, with a faint edge to White who can continue with f2-f4 etc.

b) 13...♙c5 14 Qe4 (or 14 Qb3 Qxb3 15 ♖xb3 0-0! [Chekhov's move] 16 axb5 axb5 17 ♙xa8 ♖xa8 18 ♙xb5 h6! with compensation in Adams-I.Sokolov, Moscow Olympiad 1994; Black can even play slowly as his more active pieces are difficult to dislodge) 14...0-0!? (or 14...♙b6 15 Qfg5 Qxg5 16 ♙xg5 ♖d7, as in A.Rodriguez-Korneev, Barbera del Valles 1994, when 17 ♙e1 offers some initiative for White) 15 Qxc5 Qxf3+ 16 ♖xf3 Qxc5 17 axb5 axb5 18 ♙g5 ♙xa1 (this shows self-confidence!) 19 ♙xd8 ♙xf1+ 20 ♖xf1 ♙d8 21 g3 Qe6 22 ♖b7 g6 23 ♙xb5 c5, when the game Topalov-Anand, Dos Hermanas 1996, was soon drawn as White cannot make progress.

Both the alternatives are reasonable, but the text offers the most potential for the second player to generate winning chances.

14 Qxd4 Qxd4

The continuation 14...♖xd4 15 axb5 ♖xe5 16 bxa6 0-0 17 ♖a4 ♙fb8 18 a7 ♚b7 19 Qf3 ♖b5, as in Hjartarson-Smejkal, West Germany 1990 (amongst others), is not bad but White keeps a slight initiative into the ending as the a-pawn will take time to round-up.

15 Qe4 0-0

After 15...Qe6?! 16 ♙c3 0-0 17 f4 ♖xd1 18 ♙fxd1 ♙fb8 19 ♙d7 ♙f8 20 f5 Qd8 21 a5! Black had a passive ending in Korpnov-Korchnoi, Merano (18th matchgame) 1981.

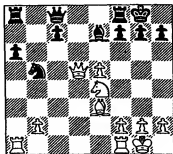
16 axb5 Qxb5 17 ♙e3 ♖c8

Black's queenside pawns are split. White can press along the a- and c-files but in the meantime Black is able to activate his position and search for counterplay in the centre.

18 ♖d5

A good example of how Black can address White's pressure against the weak pawns was 18 ♖c2 ♖e6 19 f4 ♙ad8 20 ♙a4 ♙d7 21 ♙fa1 ♖d5 22 h3 f6 23 exf6 ♙xf6 24 Qxf6+ ♙xf6 25 ♙xa6 ♙xa6 26 ♙xa6 Qd4 with

sufficient activity for the pawn in Adams-Yusupov, Hastings 1989/90.



18...♘d8?!

Yusupov believes that Black has enough counterplay with 18...♖f5! 19 ♖g3 (or 19 f4 ♘ad8) 19...♗g6, intending ...♘ad8 with counterplay.

19 ♖c6 ♖f5

It might have been better to play 19...♗d4 20 ♗xd4 ♘xd4 21 f4 a5, which in Yusupov's opinion limits White's advantage to a minimum.

20 f4 h5 21 h3 ♘ab8 22 ♗f1

22 ♘xa6?! ♗d3 allows Black too much play.

22...♗h4 23 ♖c2 ♗h8 24 ♖c4 ♗g6 25 ♗h1 ♗e7 26 ♗c5 ♗h4 27 ♖e2

White has consolidated his position and now threatens ♖f3 and f4-f5.

27...♘d1+ 28 ♘d1 ♗e8 29 ♖f3 ♖f5 30 ♗g1 ♗g8 31 ♗c5 g6 32 ♖c6

Note how Black's knight on b5 is just a spectator.

32...♖c8 33 e6! ♗xe6

If 33...fxe6 34 ♖c4 ♗h7 then 35 f5 is crushing.

34 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 35 ♖xe6 fxe6 36 ♗a1

The exchange down, Black has too many weaknesses to hold.

36...♗g3 37 ♘a6 ♗f7 38 ♗h2 ♗f2 39 ♖c6 ♗e7 40 ♗g1 ♗g3 41 ♖c5 c6 42 ♗xc6 ♗xf4 43 ♗b6 ♗c7 44 ♗h2 g5 45 ♗xf4 gxf4 46 ♗g1 ♗d5 47 ♗b7+ ♗f6 48

♗f2 ♗e5 49 ♗f3 ♗d4 50 ♗a7 ♗e5 51 ♗a4 ♗f5 52 ♗d4 ♗e5 53 ♖c4 ♗f5 54 b4 e5 55 b5 ♗b6 56 ♖c6 1-0

Game 74

Van der Wiel-Korchnoi

Sarajevo 1984

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 9 ♗bd2 ♗c5 10 c3 d4 11 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 12 cxd4 ♗cxd4 13 ♗e4 ♗e7

A good move which avoids reams of theory is 13...♗d5, e.g. 14 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 15 ♗c3 ♖c4! (15...♗d7 gives White the better of it, as after 16 ♗e3 ♗c5 17 ♖h5 he threatens both 18 ♗ad1 and 18 e6) 16 ♗e3 ♗d8 17 ♗xd4 ♗c5 18 e6 ♗xd4 19 exf7+ ♗xf7 20 ♖f3+ ♗f4 21 ♖h5+ g6 22 ♗d5+ ♖xd5 23 ♗xd5 ♗d4 24 ♗xc7 ♗b6 25 ♗f1 ♗hd8 26 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 27 ♗xa6 ♗d2 and Black had, if anything, the better of it in Andrijevic-Todorovic, Panchevo 1989. In this line Korchnoi gives 21 ♖b7 as better for White, but if we look further with 21...♗f8! 22 g3! (not 22 ♗d5? as 22...♗xf2! 23 ♗xf2+ ♗g8 wins for Black) 22...♗f5 23 ♗e4 ♗g8 24 ♗xc5 (rather than 24 ♗ac1 ♗xf2+ 25 ♗xf2 ♗xf2) 24...♖xc5 25 ♗ac1 ♗d4 26 ♗xc7 ♖xb2 then Black has equalised (Flear).

14 ♗e3 ♖f5

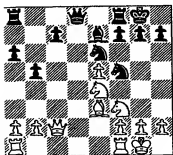
14...♗xf3+?! 15 ♖xf3 0-0 16 ♗f1 gave White comfortable development in Karpov-Korchnoi, Merano (14th matchgame) 1981, and after 16...♖e8? 17 ♗f6+! White was simply winning, viz. 17...♗xf6 18 exf6 ♖c8 19 fxf7 ♗d8 20 h4 c5 21 ♗ac1 ♖c7 22 h5 ♖e5 23 h6 ♖xb2 24 ♗d7 ♗xd7 25 ♖xa8+ ♗d8 26 ♖xa6 ♖e2 27 ♗f1 ♗d1 28 ♖a8+ ♗d8 29 ♖c6 and White soon won.

15 ♖c2 0-0

see following diagram

Not of course 15...♗xe3? because of the disruptive 16 ♖c6+.

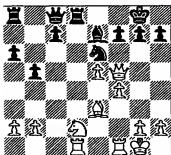
16 ♗f6+



another World Championship game in 1961. 16 Qe5 Qxg5 17 Qxg5 g6 18 Rf6 fxe6 19 Ra1 Rd5 20 b3 Ra8, as in the game between Merano (16th match) 1981, but in this particular case Black

is okay.

The main alternative, 16 Rxd1, is seen in the next two main games.
 ...Rxf6 17 Rxf5 Re7 18 Rxd1
 The continuation 18 Rfd1 Rc8 19 Ra1 Rxd8+ Qxd8 21 Re4 c5 22 b3, as in the game between Botterill, Swansea 1987, is best entered by 22...Rb8!, not allowing the knight to b7, followed by ...Rd7 and ...Rd8.
 ...Rc8 19 Qd2 Rd8 20 f4



...c5

21...Qd4! 21 Re4 Qf5 (Van der Wiel) is a better way to equality.

Rh3 Rd3

Van der Wiel instead offers the suggestion

21...Qd4 22 f5 Rd5 23 Qxd4 Rxd4 24 Qf3 Rxd1 25 Rxd1 c4 as a better way of obtaining counterplay for Black.

22 Qe4 Rxd1 23 Rxd1 Qc7 24 Qc3

On 24 f5 there is 24...Qxe5.

24...Rd8 25 Qd5 Rb7 26 Rf3 Qh8 27 Qxe7 Rxe7 28 Rxd8+ Rxd8 29 f5 Qd4 30 Re4 Qg8 31 Qf1

White should probably play 31 e6.

31f..g6 32 g4 Rc8 33 e6 gxf5 34 gxf5 Rc8!

An excellent defensive move. After the alternative 34...fxe6, Van der Wiel intended 35 Qxd4 cxd4 36 Rxe6+ Rxe6 37 fxe6 Qf8 38 Qe2 Qe7 39 Qd3 Qxe6 40 Qxd4 Qd6 41 b4 and wins!

35 Rg4+ Qf8 36 Rh6+ Qe7 37 f6+ Qxf6 38 Rg5+ Qe5 39 exf7

39 e7 Qe6 40 Qf2 Qd7 looks a little delicate but Black can live with it.

39...Rh1+ 40 Qf2 Rxd2+ 41 Rg2 Rxd2+ 42 Qxg2 Qe6 43 Re7 c4 44 Qg3 a5 45 a3 Qf5! ½-½

White cannot avoid the exchange of his remaining pawns after 46 Qh4 Qg6 47 Rf8 Qxf8 48 Qxf8 Qf5 49 Qg3 Qe4 50 Qf2 Qd3 51 Qe1 Qc2 52 Rg7 b4 or a dead-drawn ending after 49 Qc5 Qe4 50 Qb6 b4 51 Qxa5 bxa3 52 bxa3 Qd5, as it's the wrong rook's pawn.

Game 75

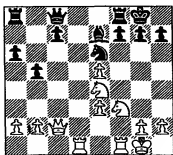
De Firmian-Hellers

Biel 1989

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Rb5 a6 4 Re4 Qf6 5 O-O Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Rb3 d5 8 dxe5 Re6 9 Qbd2 Qc5 10 c3 d4 11 Re6 Qxe6 12 cxd4 Qxd4 13 Qe4 Re7 14 Re3 Qf5 15 Qc2 O-O 16 Rxd1 Qxe3 17 fxe3

White's doubled isolated e-pawns have a positive side; they restrict Black's minor pieces and White can press on the f-file against f7.

17...Rc8



In this game, by playing an early Qd4, White restores his structure to a semblance of normality. Alternative plans not involving Qd4 are discussed in the next main game.

18 Qd4

Or 18 Qg3 Nd8 (ready to meet White's Qf5 with ...xf8; indeed Hellers, instructively, is now able to stave off the king attack without making any weakening pawn moves) 19 Qd4 Qxd4 20 exd4 c6 21 Qf5 xf8 22 Nd3 We6 23 Wd2 Nd7 24 Ng3 Wh8 25 Wg5 Wg6 26 Wh4 We6 27 Nh3 Wg6 28 Hf4 Nbd8 29 Ng3 We6 30 Nh3 Wg6 with a draw by repetition in Sax-Hellers, Haninge 1989.

18...Qxd4 19 exd4 We6!

A pawn sacrifice linking the rooks which are ready to come to the c- and d-files.

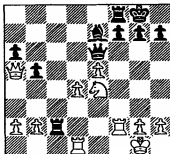
20 Wxc7

Taking up the challenge. The possibilities after declining the pawn are also interesting:

a) 20 Nd3 f6 21 Wxc7 (taking it after all!) 21...fxe5 22 Wxe5 Hxf1+ 23 Wxf1 Hf8+ 24 Hf3 Wc4+ 25 Qf2 Qh4+ 26 Qe3 Wc1+ 27 Qd3 Wb1+, as in Chandler-Yusupov, Minsk 1982, with a perpetual check looking like best play.

b) 20 Qg3 c6 (after 20...f6! 21 Qf5 fxe5? 22 Wb3 Black is forced to shed a piece and he resigned, Tseshkovsky-Yusupov, Yerevan 1982; ugly is 20...c5! 21 dxc5 Hfc8 22 b4, as the protected passed pawn gave White a positional advantage in Wedberg-Morovic, New York 1988) 21 Qf5 Hfe8 22 Qxe7+ (or

22 Nd3 Qf8 23 Nh3 g6 24 Qh6+ Qxh6 25 Nxb6 c5! and with the rook on h6 'offside' Black had enough counterplay in Short-Yusupov, Montpellier Candidates 1985) 22...Hxe7 23 Hf3 Hd7 24 Hc3 Wxa2 25 Hxc6 Hxd8 with equal chances in Smirin-Mikhailchishin, Klaipeda 1988.
20...Hac8 21 Wa5 Hc2 22 Hf2



22...Wg4

Theory frowns upon 22...Hfc8! but this is not justified in my opinion. On examining 23 We1 Hxf2 (23...Wxa2?! turned out badly after 24 Qd6 H8c7 25 Hxc2 Hxc2 26 We4 Hxb2 27 Hf1 as White had a powerful attack, Hübner-Ljubojevic, Tilburg 1985) 24 Wxf2 Wxa2 25 d5 Wb3 26 Wf3 Wxb2 27 d6 Qd8 28 Hf1, which led to a White win after 28...f6? in Gavriljansky-V.Balashov, correspondence 1988, I spent some time analysing 28...Wa2!, after which 29 d7 (or 29 Qf6+ Qxf6 30 exf6 We6) 29...Qb6+ 30 Qh1 Hf8 looks fine for Black.

23 We1 Qb4 24 Qc3 Hxf2 25 Qxf2 f6 26 exf6

The ending after 26 e6 Hc8 27 We4 Wxe4 28 Qxe4 Hxe6 29 Qc5 Hd6 30 Qe2 f5 as in Gavriljansky-Hramov, correspondence 1988, offers equal chances.

26...Hxf6+ 27 Qg1 He6

Black cannot easily win back the pawn but his pieces are so active that White struggles to consolidate. Thus a dynamic equilibrium is achieved.

28 ♖f1 ♗d6 29 ♖f3 ♖xf3 30 gxf3 ♔h6
31 ♗d2 ♗f4 32 ♗e2 ♗d6 ½-½

Black certainly has nothing to worry about after 33 d5 (or 33 ♗e4 ♗xd4! 34 ♗xd4 ♗e3+) 33...b4 34 ♗e8+ ♖f7 35 ♗e4 ♗.xh2+ 36 ♖.xh2 bxc3 37 bxc3 ♗xd5.

We can conclude that the pawn sacrifice gives adequate play.

Game 76
Prasad-Ernst
Gausdal 1991

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♗f6
5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5
♗e6 9 Qbd2 ♗c5 10 c3 d4 11 ♗xe6
♗xe6 12 cxd4 ♗cxd4 13 ♗e4 ♗e7 14
♗e3 ♗f5 15 ♖c2 0-0 16 ♗ad1 ♗xe3 17
fxe3 ♖c8 18 h3

White aims to bring his knights to such threatening squares as f5 and g4.

After 18 ♗d3 I prefer Beliavsky's suggestion of 18...♗d8 (to exchange off a potential attacking piece) to 18...c5, as I don't like the idea of letting the knight into d6 so easily. White is better after 19 ♗d6 ♖c7 20 ♗fd1 ♗fd8 21 ♗d5 ♗f8 22 b3, as in Short-Beliavsky, Barcelona 1989, since he has a bind. Interesting was 19...♖b8!? (instead of 19...♖c7) 20 b3 ♗a7 21 ♗fd1 ♗d8 22 ♗xf7 (why not 22 ♗d5, keeping the tension?) 22...♖xf7 23 ♗xd8, as in Stoica-Marin, Eforie-Nord 1988, when 23...♗xd8 24 ♖f5+ ♖e7 25 ♖.xh7 ♗d7 26 ♖h4+ ♖e8 27 ♖h8+ ♖e7 (Stoica) is immediately drawn.

Black equalised after 18 ♖c6 ♖e8 19 ♗c1 ♖xc6 20 ♗xc6 ♗fd8 21 ♗fc1 ♗d5 22 ♗c3 ♗c5 23 ♗e2 ♗xc1+ 24 ♗xc1 ♗c5 25 ♖f2 ♗b6 in G.Kuzmin-P.Thipsay, New Delhi 1984, as his rook is now freed from its defensive task.

18...♗d8

After 18...a5 19 ♗d4 ♗xd4 20 exd4 ♖e6 21 ♖h1 c6 22 ♗g3 ♗fd8, Klován-F. Levin, Groningen 1991, play is similar to Game 74, note to White's 20th move. Instead

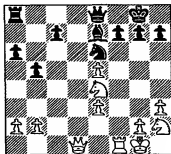
Korchnoi's suggestion of 19 ♖c6!? can be met by 19...♗b8 with ideas of ...♗b6.

Black failed to keep White at bay in Ioseliani-Ekström, Biel 1989, with the dubious alternative 18...c5?! 19 ♗h2 ♖c7 20 ♗g4 ♖h8 21 ♗d6 ♗d8 22 ♗d5 c4 23 ♗f6! with a crushing attack. Again prematurely giving away control of the d6-square helps White.

19 ♗h2

If 19 ♗c1 then 19...c5 is the move (since here Black has adequate control of the d6-square), when 20 ♖f2 ♖b7 21 ♗h2 ♖xe4! 22 ♖xf7+ ♖h8 23 ♖xe6 ♗g5 led to equal chances in Karpov-Yusupov, Linares 1983.

19...♗xd1 20 ♖xd1 ♖e8



A useful move. Black defends the f7- and b5-pawns and prepares to develop his rook by ...♗d8 or ...a6-a5 and ...♗a6.

21 ♗g4

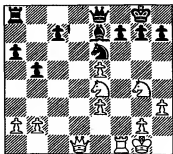
Two other moves have been tried here:

a) 21 ♖h5 ♗c5 22 ♗g3 a5! (an attractive manoeuvre which limits White's scope for an attack) 23 ♗f5 ♗a6 24 ♗g4 ♗g6 25 b3 (or 25 ♖h2 ♗d8!) 25...♗d8 26 ♗f2 ♖c6 27 e4, as in Tal-Korchnoi, Reykjavik 1987, when Black can even play 27...♗xe4 28 ♖d1 ♗d6 29 ♗g4 ♗b7 and escape with his booty.

b) Black's manoeuvres were less convincing in Watson-Flear, London 1990, when after 21 ♗g3 a5 22 ♗f5 ♗a6 23 ♖d5 ♗d8 24 ♗g4 h5 25 ♗h2 ♗f8 26 ♗f3 ♗g6 27 ♗d1 ♗e7 my opponent could have taken

a pawn with 28 Qxc7+ Wxe7 29 Wxb5 .

It's not clear that 21... Nd8 (instead of 21...a5) 22 Wc2 c5 23 Qg4 Nd7 (23...c4! transposes back to the main game) 24 Qf5 Wh8 25 We4 was any better in Mokry-Ernst, Gausdal 1989. After 25... Wc8 26 Qd6 Qxd6 27 exd6 Nxd6 28 Nxf7 Black had problems.



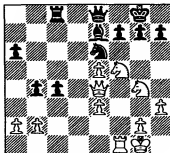
21... Nd8 22 Wc2 c5 23 Qg3 c4! 24 We4 Nc8

The active 24... Qc5 ! has its points. If 25 Wf4 then 25... Qd3 , while on 25 Wf5 Qd3 or even 25...b4.

25 Qf5 b4

Ernst, with the benefit of experience from his game against Mokry, finds a way to obtain counter-chances. A passed queenside pawn is just the counterbalance that Black

requires.



26 Qf6+ !

Prasad felt that Black has enough play after 26 Wb7 Nc7 27 Wxa6 c3, but I think that White should have tried 26 Qd6 ! Qxd6 27 exd6 and if 27...c3?! (the best chance is 27...a5 and if 28 Nd1 then 28... Wa4) then 28 Wxb4 a5 29 Wb3 c2 30 Nc1 Wc6 31 Wd3 is much better for White.

26... gxh6 27 Qxh6+ Wh8 28 Qxf7+ Wg8 29 Wg4+ Qg7 30 e6

White's attack is dangerous but only seems to yield a perpetual check.

30... Qc5 31 Wg5 We7

31... Wxe6 ? fails to the artistic 32 Qh6+ Wh8 33 Wxc5 !

32 Qh6+ Wh8 33 We5 Wc7 ½-½

Summary

Despite the great popularity of 9 Qbd2, Black has several ways to achieve a good game. In Games 66-68, Black avoids the main line and in each case should more or less equalise. The surprise effect of 11 Qg5 has gone and Black can confidently decline the sacrifice with 11...Qd5 (Game 71) which promises a safe position, or aim to navigate sharp unclear complications by taking the knight (Game 72).

The well established 11 Qxe6 (Games 73-76) requires accurate defence on Black's part, but he has no particular cause for concern.

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qb5 a6 4 Qa4 Qf6 5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Qb3 d5 8 dxe5 Qe6 9 Qbd2

9...Qc5

9...Qc7 - Game 66

9...Qc5 - Game 67

10 c3 d4

10...Qxb3 - Game 68

10...Qg4 - Game 69

11 Qxe6

11 Qg5 (D)

11...dxc3 - Game 70

11...Qd5 - Game 71

11...Wxg5 - Game 72

11...Qxe6 12 cxd4 Qcxd4 13 Qe4

13 a4 (D) - Game 73

13...Qe7 14 Qe3 Qf5 15 Wc2 0-0 16 Ed1

16 Qf6+ - Game 74

16...Qxe3 17 fxe3 Wc8 (D) 18 h3

18 Qd4 - Game 75

18...Ed8 - Game 76



11 Qg5



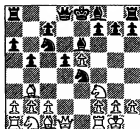
13 a4



17...Wc8

CHAPTER ELEVEN

White's Other Ninth Moves



1 e4 e5 2 d3 dxc6 3 dxb5 a6 4 dxa4 d16
5 0-0 dxe4 6 d4 b5 7 dxb3 d5 8 dxe5
dxe6

So far in this book we have examined White's most popular moves, 9 c3, 9 We2 and 9 Qbd2. The most commonly played alternative to these is 9 dxe3 (Games 77-79), but in this chapter we shall also consider 9 Re1 (Game 80) and 9 a4 (Games 81 and 82).

In Games 77 and 78 Black meets 9 dxe3 with the defence 9...dxc5. The conclusion from these examples is that Black has a difficult game. This suggests that the popular 9...dxe7 is the best reply, as in Game 79, when a transposition to Chapter 8 arises after 10 c3. In Game 80, we see that Black has no particular problems after 9 Re1.

However, 9 a4 has some surprise value. In fact, an early a2-a4 in a number of positions forces Black to make a decision on the queenside. In general the safest is to react with ...b5-b4, as here, closing the game in order to catch up in development.

Game 77

L. Bronstein-Sorokin
General Pico City 1996

1 e4 e5 2 d3 dxc6 3 dxb5 a6 4 dxa4 d16
5 0-0 dxe4 6 d4 b5 7 dxb3 d5 8 dxe5

dxe6 9 dxe3 dxc5

The safest move here is 9...dxe7 (see Game 79).

White is able to obtain an edge due to control of d4 and c5 after 9...dxc5 10 dxc5 (or, as quoted in older books, 10 Wd3 0-0 11 d3! dxb4 12 We2 dxc3 13 bxc3 dxe3 14 Wxc3 dxc6 15 a4 Qa5 16 axb5 axb5 17 We5, as in Kholmov-Antoshin, USSR Championship 1967) 10...dxc5 11 Qd4 Qxd4 12 Wxd4 Qb7 13 c3 c5 14 Wf4 0-0 15 Qd2 Qa5 16 dxc2 dxc6 17 Wg3 Wd7 18 Rad1 dxf5 19 dxf5 Wxf5 20 Qb3, as in Imanaliev-Mamadzoev, Azov 1991.

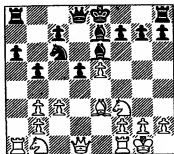
Another promising plan for White here is 10 Re1 (instead of 10 dxc5) 10...0-0 11 c3 dxe3 12 Re3 Qa5 13 Qbd2 Qxb3 14 axb3 Qxd2 15 Wxd2 c5 16 b4! with the better chances in Bolagan-Ermeni, Basel 1999.

10 c3

Until the present game, theory didn't suggest that this creates problems for Black. See Game 78 for 10 d3.

10...Qxb3 11 axb3 dxe7

A worthwhile alternative was tested in King-Kaidanov, Palma de Mallorca 1989: 11...dxe7 12 dxe7 dxe7 13 Qa3 0-0 14 h3 dxb5 15 Qxc2 Wd7 16 Qe3 Rfd8 17 g4 dxe6 18 Qd4 Qxd4 19 cxd4 c5 with a tough battle in prospect.

**12 Qbd2**

The sharp move 12 Qd4! can be defused by 12...Qxe5 (also sound is 12...Qxd4 13 cxd4 0-0 14 Qc3 f6 15 f4 fxe5 16 fxe5 Nxf1+ 17 Qxf1 Qb4 18 Qg1 Qxc3 19 bxc3 a5, and Black had winning chances in Ghinda-Yusupov, Dubai Olympiad 1986, as he threatens to create an outside passed pawn) 13 f4 Qg4 14 Qxe6 Qxe3 15 Qxd8 Qxd1 16 Nxd1 Nxd8 17 Qxc6 with equal chances – Yusupov and Dvoretzky.

Another plan 12 h3 0-0 13 b4 Wd7 14 Qbd2 was rather elaborate in A.Kuzmin-Sorokin, USSR 1988, when Black was able to equalise with 14...d4 15 Qxd4 Qxe5.

12...0-0

With the benefit of hindsight, Black would have done better to have tried 12...Qg4, when after 13 Wc2 Wd7 14 Qg5 Qf5 15 Qd1 Qxg5 16 Qxg5 0-0 17 Ne1 Nfd8 18 Qgf3 d4 he seized the initiative in Timman-Yusupov, Tilburg 1987.

13 b4 d4 14 Qxd4 Qxd4

Not here 14...Qxe5 as 15 Qxe6 fxe6 leaves the black pawn structure compromised.

15 Qxd4 Qxb4 16 Qe4 Wd5 17 Wd3!

A clear improvement on 17 Wf3 Nfd8 18 Nfd1 Qf8 19 b4 Wc4 20 Qd2 Wd5 with a balanced position in Panchenko-Sorokin, USSR 1991.

After the game move White threatens 18 cxb4 and 18 Qg5 and Black suddenly has big

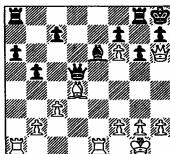
problems finding a credible defence.

17...Nfd8

After 17...Qe7, 18 Qf6+ Qxf6 (18...gxf6 19 Wg3+ Qh8 20 exf6 wins immediately for White) 19 exf6 gives useful attacking chances for White and after 17...c5 the attack launched by 18 Qg5 is strong.

18 Qg5 g6 19 Qe4 Qe7 20 We3

With strong pressure against the black king.

20...Qg7 21 Qf6 Qxf6 22 exf6+ Qh8 23 Wh6 Qg8 24 Nfe1

Threatening 25 Ne5, followed by doubling on the e-file. White has ideas based on Nxe6 followed by f7+ or Ne4-h4. The attack is particularly strong due to the presence of opposite-coloured bishops.

Black rather desperately decides to give up his queen to obtain some freedom, but to no avail.

24...c5 25 Ne5 cxd4 26 Nxd5 Qxd5 27 Wg5 Qgd8 28 cxd4 a5 29 h4 Qc4 30 Ne1 Nxd4 31 Wh6 Qg81-0

White mates with 32 Ne8.

Game 78**Dvoiris-Sorokin**

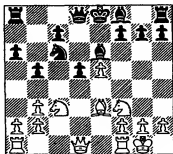
Russian Ch., Voronezh 1988

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qb5 a6 4 Qa4 Qf6 5 0-0 Qxe4 6 d4 b5 7 Qb3 d5 8 dxe5 Qe6 9 Qe3 Qc5 10 Qc3

Now the threat to the d5-pawn forces

Black's hand.

10...♟xb3 11 cxb3



This recapture away from the centre offers White the option of pressing along the c-file.

11...♞d7

Mikhailchishin suggests 11...♟b8, when Korchnoi's 12 ♟d4 can be met by 12...c5 13 ♟xe6 fxe6 14 ♞h5+ g6 15 ♞g4 ♞d7 with a playable position (Flear). Black's suspicious-looking kingside pawn structure is compensated by flexible queenside pawns.

The natural move 11...♟e7 is perhaps the most popular but it fails to convince. After the continuation 12 ♞c1 ♞d7 (12...0-0? 13 ♟xb5 axb5 14 ♞xc6 ♞xa2 15 ♞b1 ♞a8 16 ♞fc1 allows White a clear advantage as c7 is fatally weak - Korchnoi) 13 h3 0-0 14 ♟e2 ♞fc8 15 ♟f4 a5 16 a3 ♟d8 17 ♟d3 ♟f5 18 ♟c5 ♟xc5 19 ♟xc5 ♟e6 20 ♟d4, as in Groszpeter-Brunner, Biel 1990, White achieves the optimal central bind.

After 13 ♟e2 (instead of 13 h3) Black fared better in Smagin-Mikhailchishin, Moscow 1989, as after 13...♞c8 14 ♟f4 0-0 15 ♟c5 ♞fd8 16 ♟xe7 ♟xe7 17 ♞d4 he was able to play 17...♟g4 with a reasonable game. This explains why Groszpeter was quick to play h2-h3.

Black tried another way in Winsnes-Krasenkov, Stockholm 1989/90: 13 ♞d2 0-0 14 ♞fd1 ♞ad8 15 ♟g5 d4 16 ♟e4 ♟d5 17 ♞f4 ♟xg5 18 ♟fxg5 ♞e7, but after 19 ♞xc6!! ♟xc6 20 ♟f6+ White had a winning

attack.

12 ♞d2 ♞d8 13 ♟g5

By exchanging dark-squared bishops, White hopes to obtain a 'good knight versus bad bishop' middlegame. This would particularly be effective if he were allowed to blockade the centre on d4 and c5.

13...♟e7 14 ♞ac1 ♟g4 15 ♟xe7 ♟xe7 16 ♟e1 c5

So Black has freed his c-pawn, but now he experiences difficulties due to his lack of development.

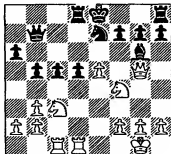
17 ♟d3 ♞a7

Black could have considered 17...♞c8! and if 18 b4 cxb4 19 ♟xb4 then 19...a5!

18 ♞g5 ♟f5 19 ♟f4 ♟g6

Korchnoi proposes 19...d4 as an improvement, but still prefers White's prospects after 20 ♟h5 ♟g8 21 ♟e2.

20 ♞fd1 ♞b7



21 e6!

The d5-pawn is attacked by a fourth piece and Black has yet to castle.

21...f6 22 ♞g4 d4 23 ♟xg6 hxg6 24 ♟e4

Now the c-pawn comes under fire!

24...c4 25 bxc4 bxc4 26 ♞f4

26 ♞xc4 allows Black to struggle on with 26...♞xb2 (26...f5 27 ♞f4 ♞xe4 is refuted by 28 ♞cxd4), whereas the text move threatens 27 ♟d6+.

26...♞d5 27 ♟d2 c3 28 bxc3 dxc3

The black central pawns have crept

forward but with Black's king still in the centre all is lost.

29 ♖f1 ♜xe6

After 29...♜xd1 30 ♜xd1 ♜xd1 simply 31 ♜a4+ wins the rook.

30 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 31 ♜xc3 ♜h5 32 ♜b8+ ♖c8 33 ♜c7+ 1-0

Black's position seems too difficult to handle after 10 ♖c3, so 9...♖c5 is not to be recommended.

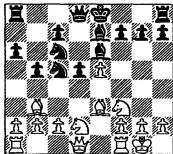
Game 79
Dvoiris-Kaidanov
USSR 1984

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxe5
♖e6 9 ♖e3 ♖e7 10 ♖bd2

Here 10 c3 is White's best move, as in Chapter 8.

A poor alternative is 10 ♜e1! 0-0 11 ♖c3 ♖b4 12 ♜d1 ♜e8 13 ♜d3 ♖e7 and White is left with his pieces all tangled up, Zaitsev-Unzicker, Moscow 1982.

10...♖c5



11 ♖g5

11 c3! is embarrassed by 11...♖d3! forking two pawns. Then 12 ♜c2 ♖xe5 13 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 14 ♖d4 16 15 ♜fe1, as in the game T'shkovsky-Kaidanov, Moscow 1985, should have been followed up with 15...♖f7 16 ♖xe5 fxe5 17 ♜xe5 0-0 with the better chances for Black in Kaidanov's opinion.

Relatively best, but not too worrying for Black is 11 ♖d4 ♖xd4 12 ♖xd4 ♜d7 13 c3 ♖a4 14 ♜b1 c5 15 ♖e3 0-0 16 ♖f3 ♜ad8 17 ♜e2 ♖f5 18 ♜bd1 ♜e6 with comfortable development for Black in T'shkovsky-Balashov, USSR 1980.

11...0-0

An ambitious alternative is 11...d4!, when 12 ♖xe6 fxe6 13 ♜h5+ g6 14 ♜f3 ♜d5 (Korchnoi) looks promising for the second player.

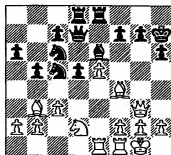
12 ♜h5

White would like to attack but this is not justified by Black's solid position.

12...♖g5 13 ♖g5 ♜d7 14 ♜a1 ♜fe8 15 ♜f3 h6

Dvoiris believes that Black should dispense with this move and play 15...d4 16 ♜g3 ♖h8 when he already prefers Black.

16 ♖f4 ♜ad8 17 ♜g3 ♖h7 18 c3



18...♖f5

An imprecision. Instead, 18...d4 19 ♖c2+ ♖f5 leaves Black with full development and his central play starting to roll. It is of course logical for Black to push with ...d5-d4; White has abandoned any pretence of central control for rather naive attacking gestures and frankly deserves to be punished!

19 ♜d1 ♜e7 20 ♜fe1 a5 21 ♖f1 ♖xb3 22 axb3 ♜e6 23 ♜e3 ♖c2?

A dubious pawn exchange. Again 23...d4 was the move and when the smoke clears it will be Black who has the more active pieces:

24 cxd4 ♖d5 25 ♘g3 ♙c2 26 ♜d2 ♞xd4 27 ♛c3 ♙xb3 28 ♛xa5.

24 ♜d2 ♙xb3 25 ♖d3+ ♘g8 26 ♛xb5 ♙c4 27 ♖c5

Since White's knight will be quite threatening on e3, Black would do well to exchange it off with 27...♙xf1.

27...f6 28 ♘e3 ♘xe5 29 ♙xe5 ♛xe5 30 ♛xa5 f5 31 ♜dd1 ♙b3 32 ♜a1

White has the better minor piece but Black still has enough counterplay after Dvoiris's suggestion of 32...d4.

32...♜a8?

A time-trouble mistake, quickly made and long regretted!

33 ♛xa8 ♜xa8 34 ♜xa8+ ♘h7 35 ♜a3 ♙c4 36 ♜aa1 ♙b5 37 ♜ad1 c6 38 ♞xd5 ♖b8 39 ♘e3 ♙a4 40 ♜d4 f4 41 ♜xa4 fxe3 42 ♜xe3 ♛xb2 43 g3 ♖b1+ 44 ♘g2 ♖b7 45 h4 ♖f7 46 ♜ae4 c5 47 ♜e7 ♖d5+ 48 ♘g1 ♖d1+ 49 ♘h2 ♖d2 50 ♜f3 c4 51 ♜c7 ♖e2 52 ♜ff7 ♘h8 53 ♜f4 ♘h7 54 ♘g2 ♖d3 55 ♜fxc4 ♖d5+ 56 ♘h2 ♖d6 57 ♜c6 ♖f8 58 ♘g1 ♖b8 59 ♜f7 ♖b1+ 60 ♘h2 h5 61 ♜c5 ♖c2 1-0

Game 80

Kupreichik-Yusupov

USSR Championship 1981

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♙e6 9 ♜e1

A sensible developing move, preparing to meet 9...♙c5 by 10 ♙e3.

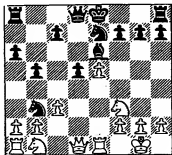
The self-weakening 9 ♘c3?! is not good due to 9...♘xc3 10 bxc3 ♘e7! (this excellent move, threatening 11...c5, was first played by Rubinstein, and is stronger than the solid 10...♙e7 11 ♘d4 ♞xd4 12 cxd4 ♖d7 13 a4 0-0 14 axb5 axb5 15 ♙d2 c5, when a draw was agreed in Van Riemsdijk-A.Rodriguez, Dieren 1989) 11 ♙a3 a5 and White must cede his dark-squared bishop to save its colleague. After 12 ♙xe7 ♙xe7 13 a4 c5 14 axb5 0-0 Black has the much better game

(Bilguer).

9...♘c5 10 ♙g5

After 10 ♘g5 Black can simply play 10...♖d7 11 ♘xe6 fxe6 with a solid game.

10...♙e7 11 ♙xe7 ♘xe7 12 c3 ♘xb3



13 ♛xb3?!

More logical was 13 axb3 c5 14 b4, wher Yusupov feels that Black has an equal game after 14...cxb4 15 cxb4 0-0. After continuing with some natural moves, 16 ♘d4 ♖b6 17 ♘a3 ♜ac8 18 ♘ac2 ♜fd8 19 ♜a3, Fritz 5 then actually prefers Black – a controversial judgement; it clearly doesn't rate White's blockade very highly.

13...c5

13...d4 is premature as the sequence 14 ♖d1 dxc3 15 ♘xc3 has just helped White's development.

14 a4 0-0! 15 axb5 ♖b6

Black recovers the pawn with an equal game.

16 ♖a4 ♙d7 17 ♘bd2 ♙xb5 18 ♖h4 ♘g6 19 ♖g4

It was better to play 19 ♖g3.

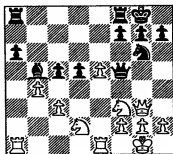
19...♖e6 20 ♖g3 ♖f5!

Black's pieces are well placed and he can start to take the initiative.

21 b4?

see following diagram

To obtain access to the d4-square but the resulting weaknesses on the c-file are a more significant factor.



21...♖ac8 22 bxc5 ♔xc5 23 e6

23 ♖e3 is met by 23...♖c2 and the c3-pawn falls.

23...♔xc3 24 e7 ♖e8 25 ♔d4 ♔xg3 26 ♔xf5 ♖c3!

Kupreichik had probably missed this move, the point being that 27 ♔d6 ♔xe7 28 ♔xe7 ♔xe7 29 ♔xb5 axb5 30 ♔a8+ is met by 30...♔c8. Now White has nothing for the pawn.

27 ♔f3 ♖c7

Black will now take the e-pawn, but only when good and ready.

28 ♔3d4 ♖c4 29 ♔ab1 h6 30 ♔b6 ♖d3 31 f3?

Losing immediately. Instead 31 h3 ♔xe7 32 ♖c3 ♖xf5 33 ♔xf5 ♖f8 34 ♔xe7 ♔cxe7 35 ♔xe7 ♔xe7 36 ♔xa6 offers some hope.

31...♔xe7 32 ♖c3 ♖c1+ 33 ♖f2 ♖c2+ 34 ♖g3 ♖xf5 35 ♔xe7 ♔xe7 36 ♔xf5 0-1

Game 81
Mowsesian-Motwani
Hastings 1996/97

1 e4 e5 2 ♔f3 ♔c6 3 ♖b5 a6 4 ♖a4 ♔f6 5 0-0 ♔xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♖b3 d5 8 dxе5 ♖e6 9 a4 b4

The best move, as is generally the case in response to an early a2-a4 by White. However, 9...♔a5!? is interesting, e.g. 10 axb5 ♔xb3 11 cxb3 axb5 12 ♔xa8 ♖xa8 13

♔d4 ♖d7 14 f3 ♔c5 15 b4 ♔e6 16 f4 ♖a7 17 ♖e3 ♖xb4 with unclear play (Korchnoi). It may be that instead of 15 b4, 15 f4!? is critical, when the game Di Bucciano-Van der Zijpp, Beverwijk 1984, continued 15...♔e4 16 f5 c5 17 e6 cxd4 18 exd7+ ♖xd7 at which point 19 ♖g4 looks like an improvement on the game's 19 ♖d3 ♖c6, which is again best judged as unclear.

10 a5

10 c3 ♖e7 transposes to Game 51.

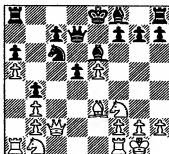
10...♔c5 11 ♖e3

This move fails to impress. For the alternative 11 ♖g5 see Game 81.

11...♔xb3 12 cxb3 ♖d7

Black can even consider 12...d4, as White had nothing after 13 ♔xd4 ♔xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 15 ♖xd4 0-0-0 16 ♖e3 ♖xb3 in Campora-Murey, Moscow 1989. More dangerous is Korchnoi's 13 ♖c2!?, when 13...dxe3 14 ♖xc6+ ♖d7 15 ♖c2 e2 16 ♖e1 ♖b5 17 ♔bd2 ♖d3 18 ♖xc7 ♖e7 19 ♔c4 ♔d8 is murky. The strong e-pawn compensates for the loss of material.

13 ♖c2



13...♖f5

Another good model for Black is the following example: 13...♔d8! (moving off the exposed c-file and heading for e6 where it can support the c-pawn) 14 ♖c5 ♖f5 15 ♖c1 ♔e6 16 ♖xf8 ♔xf8 17 ♔bd2 0-0-0 (here the queenside is quite safe as White has no way through) 18 ♖e1 ♖b7 19 ♔f1 c5 20

♠g3 ♖g6 21 ♜h4 f5 22 exf6 ♠xf6 with chances for both sides in L.Bronstein-Yusupov, Lucerne Olympiad 1982; indeed Black went on to win.

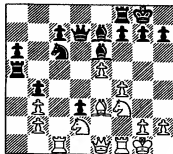
14 ♖c1 ♠b8 15 ♜h4

Changing tack as 15 ♖c5 gets nowhere after 15...♗xc5 16 ♖xc5 ♠b5 and ...0-0.

15...♗e6 16 f4 ♗e7 17 ♖e1 d4 18 ♖c1 d3

The immediate 18...♠b5 is suggested by Kenworthy in the tournament bulletin. The fact that Black has many ideas is a sign that White's strategy has been far from convincing.

19 ♜f3 ♠b5 20 ♖e3 ♠xa5 21 ♜bd2 0-0 22 ♖c1



Black has won a pawn with a good game, but on such a chaotic board everything is still possible.

22...f5

Black would like to liberate his position with 22...f6?, but would have to take account of the combination 23 f5 ♗xf5 24 ♠xc6 ♖xc6 25 ♜d4 ♖d7 26 ♜xf5 ♠xe5 27 ♖f2 ♠e8 28 ♜c4 when things are less clear.

23 ♜c4 ♠a2?

Just holding everything together with 23...♠d5! was possible, or 23...♗xc4 24 ♠xc4 ♜d8, exchanging the powerful white knight and intending ...♜e6. In either case White would rely on a blockade to resist and there would still be much work to do to exploit the extra pawn.

24 ♠a1 ♠xa1 25 ♖xa1 a5 26 ♠d1 ♠a8 27 ♜e1

White now exchanges off the d-pawn and is past the worse.

27...a4 28 ♜xd3 ♖e8 29 ♖c1 axb3 30 ♜c5 ♗xc5 31 ♗xc5 ♠d8 32 ♜e3

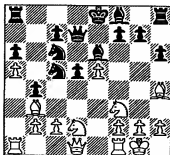
With opposite-coloured bishops it's not clear that Black can use his extra pawn.

32...h6 33 h3 g6 34 ♜h2 ♠d7 35 ♠xd7 ♖xd7 36 ♠a1 g5 37 ♖f1 ♜h7 38 ♖f3 gxh4 39 ♖xf4 ♖g7 40 ♜xf5 ♖xe5 ½-½

41 ♖xe5 ♜xe5 42 ♜d4 ♗f7 43 ♗xb4 is simply equal.

Game 82
Ljubojevic-Yusupov
Linares 1991

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♜f6 5 0-0 ♜xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxex5 ♗e6 9 a4 b4 10 a5 ♜c5 11 ♗g5 ♖d7 12 ♜bd2 h6 13 ♗h4 .



Black must now allow the exchange of dark-squared bishops or play the potentially weakening 13...g5.

13...♗e7

Risky and unclear is 13...g5!? 14 ♗g3 ♗g7 (an aggressive alternative is 14...♗e7, intending ...h6-h5) 15 c3 0-0 16 ♗c2 bxc3 17 bxc3 ♗f5 (grabbing a pawn by 17...g4 18 ♜d4 ♜xe5 is deemed good for White by Kindermann after 19 ♠e1 f6 20 ♜xe6 ♖xe6 21 f4 gxh3 22 ♜xf3, but there is nothing

wrong with 17... g4 18 h3 h5) 18 xf5 xf5 19 b3 (19 d4 sets more problems) 19... e4 20 xd5 gx3 21 fxg3 xe5 22 fd4 d3 with an interesting fight in prospect, Kindermann-Marin, Novi Sad Olympiad 1990.

14 xe7 xe7

The other sensible capture 14... xe7 is also satisfactory, e.g. 15 c3 bxc3 16 bxc3 xb3 (16...0-0 17 c2 f5 18 d4 xd4 19 cxd4 e4 was also fine for Black in Pokojowczyk-Karsa, Tapolca 1981) 17 xb3 0-0 18 e1 ab8 19 fd4 a7 20 xe6 (after 20 e2? c5 21 d4 fd8 22 wc2 d6 Black was better in Ljubojevic-Hjartarson, Amsterdam 1991) 20... fxe6 21 d4 b5 22 wc5 (22 we3?) 22... wh4 (Hjartarson). Another example is 15 we2 0-0 16 we3 fd8 (Korchnoi suggests 16... ab8 , intending ... b5) 17 c3 b7 18 c2 bxc3 19 bxc3 bxa5 20 a4 , with complex play in Vujadinovic-Kolev, Vrnjacka Banja 1990.

15 d4

Again 15 we2 0-0 16 we3 (eyeing the dark squares) comes into consideration, when the game Kindermann-Grivas, Haifa 1989, was agreed drawn after the following moves: 16... b7 17 c3 bxc3 18 bxc3 c5 19 c2 f5 20 xf5 xf5 21 f4 e7 22 c4 d8 23 cxd5 xd5 24 wc4 e6 25 fc1 fd8 26 e4 d6 27 d6 . Black has a passed pawn but it is well blockaded.

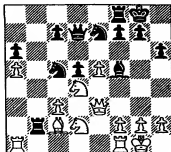
15...0-0 16 c3 bxc3 17 bxc3 ab8

Black took over the initiative after 17... g4 18 wb1? (a poor square; 18 we1 , as in the main game, or 18 f3 f5 19 c2 offer about equal chances) 18... ab8 in Kristiansen-Yusupov, Esbjerg 1990.

18 c2 g4 19 we1 b2 20 we3 f5 !

Black has at least equalised. Now neither 21 xf5 xc2 22 xe7+ xe7 (with a comfortable game for Black) nor 21 d2b3? xb3 22 xb3 b8 23 a4 c8 (and Black's pieces are the more dynamic) are any

improvement on what follows.



21 xf5 xf5 22 xf5 xf5 23 xc5 xd2

The disappearance of the minor pieces has not diminished the interest; both sides have winning chances.

24 xc7? !

24 ad1 xd1 25 xd1 we5 give White less than nothing.

24... c8 25 d6 xc3 26 xa6 cc2 27 b6

The pawn race is secondary to White's need to defend his king.

27... d4

Cutting off the queen from the defence of f2.

28 wd8+ h7 29 wh4

Holding the fort.

29... g5! ?

Black could have tried 29... we5 30 a6 a2 .

30 wh3

30 wg3? is too dangerous, e.g. 30... d3 31 f3 dd2 32 a6? (32 h1 is met by 32... h5) 32... f4 33 wh3 g4 34 fxg4 we3+ and Black wins.

30... wxh3 !

The simplest.

31 gxh3 a2 32 a6 xf2 33 xa2 xa2 34 xf7+ g8 35 d7 xa6 36 xd4 f7 37 h4 ½-½

Summary

Neither 9 ♖e1 (after 9...♗c5) nor 9 a4 (met of course by 9...b4) are dangerous.

After 9 ♗e3 the plan of ...♗c5 followed by ...♗xb3 looks insufficient and Black is given a rough time in Games 77 and 78. Black should therefore play 9...♗e7, when White's efforts to avoid transposing to Chapter 8 by 10 c3 aren't impressive.

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♗f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♗e6 9 ♗e3

9 ♖e1 – Game 80

9 a4 b4 10 a5 ♗c5

11 ♗e3 – Game 81

11 ♗g5 (D) – Game 82

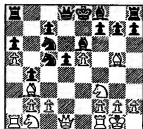
9...♗c5

9...♗e7 10 ♗bd2 ♗c5 (D) – Game 79

10 ♗c3

10 c3 ♗xb3 – Game 77

10...♗xb3 11 cxb3 (D) – Game 78



11 ♗g5



10...♗c5



11 cxb3

CHAPTER TWELVE

Odds and Ends



1 e4 e5 2 d3 dxc6 3 b5 a6 4 a4 d7
5 0-0 dxe4

This chapter features various deviations, for both sides, between move six and move eight.

6 Nc1 (Game 83) and 6 d4 b5 7 b3 d5 8 Qxe5 (Game 88) illustrate rather timid lines where White would seem to be content with a draw; note that he failed dismally in the former example. However, Game 87 looks at White's speculative and eccentric eighth move alternatives. An aggressive opponent may enjoy such perilous complications, indeed in one of them the author almost came unstuck, although some sound preparation should enable one to avoid any danger.

Black can also vary at an early stage, as we see shall in Games 84-86. The Riga variation (Game 84) is sharp and looks like a useful surprise weapon, although White can bail out with a draw, although in Game 85 Fischer shows the delayed version to be basically bad. Finally, Game 86 illustrates another tempting try for Black, 7...dxe7, where Tal's attempt at refutation has a distinctly crude feel to it. A number of other efforts are mentioned in the notes, but nothing really serves to challenge the soundness of Black's idea.

Game 83 Vitolinsh-Mikhailchishin Uzhgorod 1988

1 e4 e5 2 d3 dxc6 3 b5 a6 4 a4 d7
5 0-0 dxe4 6 Nc1

Some strong players occasionally employ this as a surprise weapon, but in my experience this move is mainly used by weaker players seeking to obtain a drawish position.

Play is similar in some respects (pawn structure, for instance) after 6 Nc1, when the recommended course of action is 6...dxc5 (rather than 6...dxf6 7 dxc6 dxc6 8 Qxe5 dxe7 9 Nc1 dxc6 10 d3 0-0? [necessary are first 10...Nc8 or 10...d7] which was terrible after 11 Qxf7! in Wedberg-Sellberg, Stockholm 1976/77) 7 dxc6 dxc6 (more secure than 7...bxc6?! 8 d4 dxc6 9 dxe5 dxe7 10 d3, as in Kholmov-Gurgenidze, USSR Championship 1957, when Black's pawn structure is unwieldy) 8 d4 (8 Nxe5+ dxe6 is nothing for White) 8...dxe6 9 dxe5 d4! (9...dxc5 10 Nd1 Nc7 11 dxc3 0-0 12 dxe4 dxc3, as in Walbrodt-Bardeleben, Hastings 1895, offers more options and freer development for White) 10 Qxd4 Nxd4 11 h3 (Or 11 Nd1 d4 12 Nxd4 dxe2 13 dxc3

♙h5 14 ♙g5 h6 15 ♙f4, as in Liangov-Sehtman, Albena 1989, and now with 15...♙c5 Black has the bishop pair and White has a kingside majority, as in the Exchange variation. Here Black has a superior version with the e-pawn already advanced to the e5-square [fixed on a dark square, the same colour as White's bishop] and Black having an ideal blockading square on e6 for his king) 11...♙e6 12 ♚d1 ♚c4 13 ♚d3 ♙e7 14 b3 ♚h4 15 ♚d2 0-0 and Black had managed to develop soundly but actively in Dückstein-Unzicker, Munich Olympiad 1958. The bishop pair compensates for White's space advantage and better pawn structure.

6...♚c5 7 ♙xc6

7 ♚c3 is deceptive. In the play-off for the 1995 blitz championship of Languedoc I fell for 7...♚xa4? 8 ♚xe5 ♙e7 (or even worse 8...♚xe5 9 ♚xe5+ ♙c7 10 ♚d5 0-0 11 ♚xe7+ ♚h8 12 ♚h5 and Black is losing; note the threat of 13 ♚xh7+) 9 ♚d5 0-0 10 ♚xc6 dxc6 11 ♚xe7+ ♚h8 12 ♚h5 with a strong initiative, as in Hamdouchi-Flear, Montpellier (blitz) 1995. In the game I lost the exchange but eventually won on time.

Correct is 7...♙e7! 8 ♚d5 e4! (8...0-0 is a little passive after 9 ♙xc6 dxc6 10 ♚xe7+ ♚xe7 11 d4 ♚e6 12 ♚xe5 f6 13 ♚e1 ♙d7 14 c4 ♚ad8 15 ♚b3 ♚f7 16 ♙e3 ♚fe8 17 ♚ed1 ♙c8 18 ♚ac1 ♚f8 19 ♙f4 ♚g6 20 ♙g3 with a small edge despite the presence of opposite-coloured bishops in Kengis-Morris, London 1991) 9 ♙xc6 dxc6 10 ♚xe7 ♚xe7 11 d4 (11 b4?! proved to be too loosening after 11...♙e6! 12 bxc5 exf3 13 ♚xf3 ♚xc5 14 ♙b2 ♚g5 15 ♙c3 0-0-0 in Kengis-Tal, Yurmala 1983) 11...♚d7 12 ♙g5 f6 13 ♚d2 0-0 14 ♚xe4 ♚f7 15 ♙f4 ♚b6 16 ♚f3 ♚d5 17 ♙d2 b5 with a very solid position for Black in Schweber-Savon, Mar del Plata 1971.

The presence of opposite-coloured bishops is a common feature in such lines.

7...dxc6 8 ♚xe5 ♙e7

If 8...♙e6?! then 9 ♚h5 is awkward as

♚xf7 is threatened.

9 d4

The continuation 9 b3 0-0 10 ♙a3 ♚e6 11 ♙xe7 ♚xe7 12 ♚c3 ♙d7 13 ♚e3 ♚ad8 14 d3 ♙c8 15 ♚h5 looks aggressive, but after 15...♚f4 16 ♚f3 ♚g5 White had nothing better than exchanging into an equal ending with 17 ♚g3 ♚xg3 18 hxg3 ♚d5 19 ♚xd5 cxd5 in Popovic-Prasad, Subotica Interzonal 1987.

9...♚e6 10 ♙e3 0-0 11 c4



White would like to obtain a pleasant space bind as in the Kengis-Morris game above. However, the presence of the bishop pair allows Black to generate dynamic counterplay.

11...f6 12 ♚f3 f5!

Giving up the e5-square but chasing White's bishop.

13 ♚c3

White has also experimented with the idea of putting the bishop on c3, as Black is about to boot it away with ...f5-f4 anyway. Thus 13 ♙d2, as in Gipslis-Averbakh, USSR Championship 1958, would be best met by 13...♙f6 14 ♙c3 ♚f4 15 ♚d2 g5! with active counterplay.

13...f4 14 ♙d2

Vitolinsh had previously experimented with 14 ♙e1, when 14...♚g5 15 ♚e5 f3 16 ♙xg5 ♙xg5 17 g3 (17 ♚xf3? is too dangerous after 17...♙g4) gave unclear play in Vitolinsh-Hermlin, USSR 1979.

14... $\text{d}f6!$?

A double-edged alternative is 14... $\text{d}g5$ 15 $\text{d}xg5$ $\text{d}xg5$ 16 $\text{d}e4$ $\text{d}e7$ 17 $\text{d}c3$ $f3$ 18 $gxf3$ $\text{W}e8$ 19 $d5$, as in Vitolinsh-Sagalchik, Minsk 1988.

15 $d5!$?

White could have tried 15 $\text{d}e2$ with the idea that 15... $\text{d}xd4!$? 16 $\text{d}fxd4$ $\text{d}xd4$ 17 $\text{d}xd4$ $\text{W}xd4$ is strongly met by 18 $\text{d}b4$. Better is 15... $g5$ with a complex game in prospect.

15... $\text{d}c5$ 16 $\text{d}e5?$

16 $\text{W}c2$ was better, trying to cover the weakness on $d3$.

16... $\text{d}xe5$ 17 $\text{H}xe5$ $\text{d}d3$ 18 $\text{H}e2$ $\text{d}f5!$

18... $\text{d}xb2!$? 19 $\text{W}b3$ $\text{d}d3$ was playable, but Black prefers to keep a bind rather than give up the initiative for an unimportant pawn.

19 $\text{d}e1$ $\text{W}f6$ 20 $\text{W}d2$ $f3!$

White's tangled pieces cannot stem the tide.

21 $\text{H}e3$ $\text{d}e5$ 22 $\text{W}d4$ $\text{H}ae8$ 23 $g3$ $\text{d}c8!$

Preparing an eventual ... $\text{W}g2$ mate!

24 $\text{d}d2$ $\text{W}f5$ 25 $\text{W}h4$ $\text{d}g6$ 0-1

If White removes the queen then 26... $\text{W}f3$ mates.

This game illustrates that Black can obtain interesting play against the variation with 6 $\text{H}e1$.

Game 84

Westerinen-Geisdorf German Bundesliga 1980

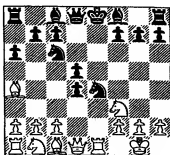
1 $e4$ $e5$ 2 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{d}c6$ 3 $\text{d}b5$ $a6$ 4 $\text{d}a4$ $\text{d}f6$ 5 0-0 $\text{d}xe4$ 6 $d4$ $exd4!$?

The risky but playable Riga variation. Black takes a second pawn but allows a nasty pin on the e-file. Although it has a dubious reputation, White cannot in fact refute this cheeky line.

7 $\text{H}e1$ $d5$

see following diagram

8 $\text{d}xd4$



White has several alternatives here:

a) ECO recommends Korchnoi's analysis 8 $\text{d}g5$ $\text{d}e7$ 9 $\text{d}xe7$ $\text{d}xe7!$ 10 $c4$ $dxxc3$ 11 $\text{d}xc3$ $\text{d}e6$ 12 $\text{d}xc6$ $bxc6$ 13 $\text{d}d4$ $\text{d}xc3$ 14 $bxc3$ $\text{d}d7$ 15 $\text{W}g4$ $c5$ 16 $\text{d}f5+$ $\text{d}d8$ 17 $\text{W}xg7$ $\text{H}e8$ 18 $\text{W}xh7$ 'with an edge to White' but 18... $\text{d}xf5$ 19 $\text{H}xe8+$ $\text{W}xe8$ 20 $\text{W}xf5$ $\text{W}e6$ looks equal to me.

b) The sharp 8 $c4$ should be met by 8... $dxxc3$ 9 $\text{d}xc3$ $\text{d}b4!$ when 10 $\text{d}g5$ (after 10 $\text{W}xd5$ $\text{W}xd5$ 11 $\text{d}xd5$ $\text{d}xe1$ 12 $\text{d}xc7+$ $\text{d}d8$ 13 $\text{d}xa8$ $\text{d}xf2+$ 14 $\text{d}f1$ $\text{d}e6$ 15 $\text{d}d2$ $\text{d}xd2+$ 16 $\text{d}xf2$ $\text{d}e4+$ 17 $\text{d}g1$ $\text{d}c5$, White 'may' have enough compensation for the pawn according to Boll) 10... $f6$ 11 $\text{d}e5$ 0-0 12 $\text{d}xc6$ (12 $\text{d}xc6$ is no good after 12... $\text{d}xg5!$) 12... $bxc6$ 13 $\text{d}xc6$ $\text{H}b8$ 14 $\text{d}xd5+$ $\text{d}h8$ 15 $\text{d}xc4$ $\text{W}xd1$ 16 $\text{H}axd1$ $fxg5$ is equal; the two bishops compensate for the bad pawns.

c) 8 $\text{d}e5$ provokes 8... $\text{d}d6$ 9 $\text{d}xc6$ $\text{d}xh2+$ 10 $\text{d}xh2$ $\text{W}h4+$ 11 $\text{d}g1$ $\text{W}xf2+$ 12 $\text{d}h2$ $\text{W}h4+$ with an immediate draw by perpetual check.

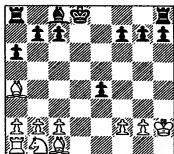
8... $\text{d}d6$ 9 $\text{d}xc6$ $\text{d}xh2+$

Perhaps the biggest drawback for ambitious Black players is that White can now take the bishop and draw (10 $\text{d}xh2$ $\text{W}h4+$ 11 $\text{d}g1$ $\text{W}xf2+$ etc.).

10 $\text{d}h1$

The other winning attempt 10 $\text{d}f1$ has been extensively analysed, the main line running as follows: 10... $\text{W}h4$ 11 $\text{d}d4+$ $b5$ 12

♠e3 0-0 13 ♘f3 ♖h5 14 ♜b3 ♙g4 15 ♗xd5
 ♙xf3 16 ♗xh5 ♙xh5 17 ♙d5 ♜ae8 18
 ♙xe4 ♜xe4 19 ♘3 f5 20 ♚d2 ♜g4, as in
 Nyholm-Leonhardt, Stockholm 1907, when
 Leonhardt's 21 ♘f3!, leading to equal
 chances after 21...♙xg3 22 ♙xg3 ♜xg3, is a
 clear improvement on the game which was
 quickly decided after 21 ♙g2? f4 22 ♙c5 ♜f5
 23 ♙e4 ♙xg3 0-1.
 10...♖h4 11 ♜xe4+ dxe4 12 ♗d8+ ♗xd8
 13 ♚xd8+ ♙xd8 14 ♙xh2



White has two pieces for the rook but
 Black has two pawns and a solid game.
 14...♙e6 15 ♙e3

After 15 ♚c3 Black can win the bishop
 with 15...c5! 16 ♙g5+ ♙c8!, as in Olthof-
 Boll, Den Bosch 1987, which continued 17
 ♙xe4 b5 18 ♚xc5 bxa4 19 ♚xa4 ♜b8 20 b3
 ♜b5 21 ♙e3 and White has only one pawn
 for the exchange.
 15...f5 16 ♚d2!

The historically more popular 16 ♚c3 is
 another reason why the Riga variation has
 been unfairly treated. Theory has been
 tainted by simply quoting the famous game
 Capablanca-Ed.Lasker, New York 1915,
 which White dominated after 16...♙e7 17 ♘g4
 g6 18 ♙g3 h5 19 ♙xf5 h4+ 20 ♙h2 ♙xf5 21
 ♚e2 b5 22 ♙b3 ♙xb3 23 axb3 ♜hg8 24
 ♜d1 ♜ad8 25 ♜xd8 ♙xd8 26 ♚d4, picking
 up the f-pawn with a winning position. Black
 didn't defend that well, the clearest
 improvement being 19...♙xf5! 20 ♙b3 ♜hg8+

21 ♙f4 ♙xb3 22 axb3 ♙e6 23 ♙d4 ♜ad8
 with the better prospects for Black in
 Nikolaiczuk-Scholten, Baden Baden 1980.

16...♙e7
 The alternative 16...♜f8 is recommended
 by Boll, but White then has several
 promising ideas, such as 17 ♘g4 g6 18 ♙xf5
 ♙xf5 and Black's king is no longer in a
 position to stop his counterpart's invasion
 after 19 ♙g3 b5 20 ♙b3 ♜g8+ 21 ♙f4 ♙e7
 22 ♙e5 or 17 f3 exf3 18 ♚xf3 f4 19 ♜d1+
 ♙c8 20 ♙c5 ♜d8 21 ♜e1 with pressure.
 17 f3!

The opening of the centre leaves the black
 king short of squares.

17...b5 18 ♙b3 exf3 19 ♚xf3 h6
 A little slow but still playable. The natural
 move is 19...♜he8, developing!
 20 ♙c5+ ♙f7 21 ♜e1 ♜he8??

A blunder. In fact the position after
 21...♙xb3! 22 ♜e7+ ♙f6 23 axb3 ♜ac8 24
 ♜d7 is still tenable with 24...g5(!). At first
 sight, this looks loosening but Black is now
 ready to liberate his king's rook and use his
 majority.

22 ♜xe6! ♜xe6 23 ♚d4 ♜ae8 24 ♙xe6
 ♜xe6 25 ♙f8 ♙xf8 26 ♙xe6 f4 27 b4
 1-0

Despite the result of this game, my
 conclusion is that the Riga variation is
 playable.

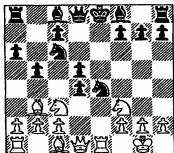
Game 85
Fischer-Trifunovic
Bled 1961

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♚c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♚f6
 5 0-0 ♙xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 exd4

Compared with the previous game, the
 capture of the second pawn is now dubious.
 The key difference is that the bishop on b3
 gives White added tactical possibilities.

8 ♜e1
 The continuation 8 ♚xd4 ♙c5? 9 ♘f5
 ♗f6 10 ♗d5 may also be dangerous for
 Black, according to Korchnoi, but Fischer

suggests 8...♖e7! which seems to hold.
8...d5 9 ♖c3!



9...♗e6

The defence is not improved by 9...dxc3 10 ♗xd5 ♗b7 11 ♗xe4! (the clearest) 11...♗c7 12 ♖e2 with unpleasant pressure in Cosulich-Harandi, Siegen Olympiad 1970, as Black cannot castle.

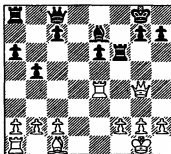
10 ♖e4 dxe4 11 ♗xe4 ♗e7 12 ♗xe6 fxe6 13 ♖xd4

Better than 13 ♗xe6 ♖d7 14 ♖c2 0-0 15 ♖e4 ♗f6 16 ♖g5 g6 and Black held on in Burn-Tarrasch, Ostend 1907.

13...0-0

Unfortunately for Black, the pin 13...e5 is undone by 14 ♖h5+ g6 15 ♖xc6 gxf5 16 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 17 ♗e3 with a big advantage for White due to the quality of the respective pawn structures.

14 ♖g4 ♖xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♖c8 16 ♗e4 ♗f6



The situation is positionally very good for White but he has to be careful.

17 ♗e3

The tempting 17 ♗g5? ♗g6 18 h4 h6 19 ♖h5 fails to 19...♖e8! 20 ♗xe7 ♗xg2+ (Fischer).

17...♖d7 18 ♗d1 ♖c6 19 ♗d4 ♗g6 20 ♖e2 ♗d8 21 g3 ♖d5 22 ♗e1

The e6-pawn comes under siege.

22...c5 23 ♗c3 ♗d6 24 ♗e5 ♗d8 25 ♗f4 c4!?

After 25...♖xa2 White would coolly cut the queen out of play with 26 b3 and then follow up with ♗xe6 when Black's king will be difficult to defend.

26 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 27 ♖xe6+ ♖xe6 28 ♗xe6 ♗f6 29 ♗xa6 ♗d1+ 30 ♖g2 ♗xb2

White has an extra pawn but Black is active, which presents technical problems.

31 ♗b6 ♗a1 32 ♗xb5 ♗xa2 33 ♗c5 ♗a4 34 ♗e5 ♗xe5 35 ♗xe5 ♗a2 36 ♗e2 ♖f7 37 ♖f3 ♖f6 38 ♖e4 g5 39 ♖d4 ♖f5 40 f3

Fischer later wrote that 40 ♖xc4 ♖g4 41 ♖b3 was simplest.

40...c3 41 ♗f2 ♗a3 42 ♖c4 h5 43 ♖b4 ♗a8 44 f4 ♖e4!

The active king holds out stubbornly for a while longer.

45 fxg5 ♖e3 46 ♗g2 ♖d4 47 ♗e2 ♗b8+ 48 ♖a4 ♗g8 49 h4 ♗f8 50 ♗e7 ♗f3 51 ♗d7+ ♖c4 52 ♗c7+ ♖d4 53 ♗d7+ ♖c4 54 ♗c7+ ♖d4 55 ♖b3 ♗xg3 56 ♗d7+ ♖e4 57 ♗h7 ♖d4 58 ♗xh5 ♗g1 59 ♗h8 ♗b1+ 60 ♖a4 ♗a1+ 61 ♖b5 ♗b1+ 62 ♖c6 ♗g1 63 ♗d8+ ♖c4 64 ♗e8 ♖b4 65 ♖d5 ♗d1+ 66 ♖e6 ♗e1+ 67 ♖f7 ♗f1+ 68 ♖g6 ♗f2 69 h5 ♗xc2 70 h6 ♗h2 71 h7 c2 72 ♗c8 ♖b3 73 ♖g7 1-0

Game 86

Tal-Smyslov

USSR Championship 1977

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6
5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 ♗e7!?

A reasonable sideline that is not easy to punish.

8 Qxe5

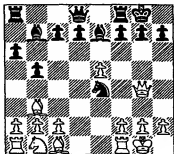
A totally speculative alternative is 8 Qd5! Qf6 9 Qxf7+! Qxf7 10 dxe5 .

White can, however, probably obtain a small edge by 8 dxe5 0-0 9 Qd5 Qc5 10 Qc3 Qb7 11 a4 b4 12 Qe4 Qxe4 13 Qxe4 d6 14 Qf4 , as in Kaiumov-Khamdanov, Shenyang 1999, since Black's pawns are rather loose.

8... Qxe5 9 dxe5 Qb7 10 Wg4! ?

Perhaps White should settle for 10 Qd5 Qxd5 11 Wxd5 Qc5 12 f4 c6 13 Wf3 0-0 14 Qe3 f5 15 exf6 Qxf6 16 Qc3 d5 17 Qad1 , as in Kupreichik-Norri, Debrecen 1992, which strikes me as starting to look like a 'normal' Open position. White has an initiative with f4-f5 and g2-g4 etc.

10...0-0



11 f3! ?

Too optimistic. Better is 11 Qe1 d5 (rather than 11... Qg5! 12 Qc3! Qxc1 13 Qxe4 Qxe4 14 Qaxc1 Qc6 15 Qe3 and White had a strong attack in Mi.Tseitlin-Puksansky, USSR 1978) 12 Qh6 Qg5! (Korchnoi's move is very solid and in his opinion preferable to 12... Qg5! ? 13 Qxg7 Qxg7 14 h4 with an edge for White).

Another try is 11 Qc3 Qxc3 12 bxc3 (12 Qh6 is nicely refuted by 12... Qf6! 13 exf6 Wxf6 14 Qg5 Wd4!) 12... Qh8 13 Qf4 d5 14 exd6 Qxd6 15 Qad1 Wc8 , which was dead equal in Anand-Piket, Roquebrune 1992.

11... Qg5

Not the greedy 11... Qc5+ ? 12 Qh1 Qf2+ 13 Qxf2 Qxf2 as 14 Qg5 yields a winning attack.

12 f4?

12 Qc3 can be defused by Smyslov's 12... Qh8 13 f4 f5! 14 exf6 Qc5+ 15 Qh1 Wxf6 and Black is suddenly the one with the attacking potential.

12... Qe4 13 f5

Tal's intuition lets him down here as he burns his bridges for a sharp but unsound attack against his fellow former World Champion.

13... Qh8

Smyslov points out the simplest defence for Black: 13... Qc5+ 14 Qh1 Qh8 15 Qc3 Qf2+ 16 Qxf2 Qxf2 17 Qg5 f6 18 exf6 gxf6 19 Qh6 Qg8 20 Qxg8 Wxg8 21 Wxg8+ , Qxg8 and Black wins.

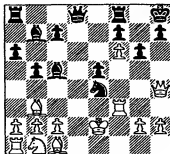
14 Qf3

Showing no fear, safer was 14 Qc3 .

14... Qc5+ 15 Qf1 d6 16 f6 g6!

Playing for the full point. After 16... gxf6 17 Qh3 fxe5 18 Qxh7+ Qxh7 19 Wh5+ Qg8 20 Wg6+ White has a perpetual.

17 Wh4 dxe5 18 Qe2



18... Wd4!

With the point that after 19 Wh6 Qc3+ Black mates quickly.

19 Qh3 Wf2+ 20 Wxf2 Qxf2 21 Qh4 Qe4 22 Qh6 Qxf6

The simplest.

23 ♖xf8 ♗xf8 24 ♖f1 ♗d8

The power of the two bishops is overwhelming.

25 c4 g5 26 ♗h3 g4 27 ♗c3 b4 28 ♗c1 ♗d4 29 g3

Stopping the rook from coming to f4, but now f3 is a handy square for Black.

29...♗f3 30 a3 a5 31 axb4 axb4 32 ♗a5 ♖d7 33 ♗c2 e4 34 ♗e1 ♗b6 35 ♗a8+ ♖g7 36 ♗d8 f5 37 ♗a4 ♖e5 38 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 39 ♖d2

A belated development for a queen's knight!

39...♗xb2 40 ♖b3 ♗c3 0-1

The e-pawn will go all the way.

Game 87
Wagman-Flear
Aosta 1990

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♖f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 ♖c3?

A fearless gambit line that is full of venom for the unruly.

The insane-looking 8 c4 is best met by 8...♗xc4 9 ♗c2 ♖f6 10 dxe5 ♗xd1 11 ♗xd1 ♖d7, while 8 a4 gives Black a wide choice. Simply 8...b4! is the most sensible to modern eyes, but the main line in the early part of the century continued 8...♖xd4!? 9 ♖xd4 exd4 10 axb5 (10 ♖c3!? is sharp) 10...♗c5 11 c3 0-0 12 cxd4 ♗b6 13 ♖c3 ♗b7 14 bxa6 ♗xa6 15 ♗xa6 ♗xa6 16 ♗e1, when the game Lasker-Schlechter, Vienna/Berlin (8th matchgame) 1910, was balanced.
8...♖xc3 9 bxc3 e4!

More cautious is 9...♗e7 but after 10 dxe5 ♗c6 11 ♖d4 White is not worse. The text move is the 'honourable' choice for those who wish to punish White's 'crazy' eighth move.

10 ♖g5 f6?!

However, this is unnecessarily provocative. Instead 10...♗f5 11 f3 e3! 12 f4 ♗d7 13 ♗f3 ♗d8 14 ♗xe3+ ♗e7, as in Sackes-Zuravlev, USSR 1962, is more to the

point. Black gives back the pawn but has the better middlegame in prospect as both of White's bishops are restricted by his ugly pawn structure.

True to my nature, I decided to hold on to the pawn, and indeed grab more, but in the process I almost lost the house.

11 ♖h3 ♗xh3 12 ♗h5+ g6 13 ♗xh3 f5

A solid-looking pawn centre perhaps, but with a centralised king and a few holes 'here and there' it proves to be rather shaky.

14 f3 ♗d7 15 fxe4 dxe4 16 a4 b4?

Not in itself bad, the question mark is for underestimating White's next move and generally being too smug.

17 a5! bxc3 18 ♗a4 ♗b4

18...♗xd4+ 19 ♖h1 ♗c4 is similar to the game except that the bishop can now go to g7 after 20 ♗g5 (following 20 ♗xf5? gxf5 21 ♗h5+ ♖d8 22 ♗g5+ ♗e7 23 ♗h6 ♗xg5 24 ♗xg5+ ♖c8 25 ♗f6 Black stays on top with 25...♖d4!) but in any case after 20...♗g7 the black king is still caught in the crossfire of White's bishops.

19 ♗g5 h5 20 d5!

Open lines are worth more than pawns, my opponent kept telling me!

Recently Wagman claimed a win for White with 20 g4 (with the idea that 20...fxg4 21 ♗e3 yields a winning attack). However, Black can defend with 20...♗xd4+ (or even 20...0-0 21 d5 hxg4) 21 ♖h1 hxg4 22 ♗xc6+ ♖f7 with enough compensation for the piece.

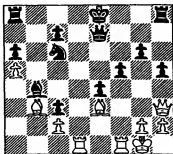
20...♗xd5 21 ♗ad1 ♗c4 22 ♗b3 ♗c5+ 23 ♗e3 ♗e7

see following diagram

24 ♗a4

The most testing is 24 ♗d5 ♗f6 25 ♗xe4! (not 25 ♗g5? ♗xg5 26 ♗xc6+ ♖e7 27 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 which simplifies, to Black's relief) and the important e-pawn falls. Black's defences are reduced and the pressure is maintained. I think that 25...♗b8! is then forced (as 25...♗d8? 26 ♗xc6+ ♗xc6 27 ♗xd8+ ♖xd8

28 ♖h4+ ♙e7 loses a rook to 29 ♖d4+ and he seems to be able to grovel on, e.g. 26 ♖g3 ♟e5 27 ♗d5 ♙d6 28 ♙d4 ♟g4! 29 ♖e1 ♙xh2+ 30 ♖h1 ♖e7, escaping.



24...♖e6 25 ♖g3 ♗h7

Not 25...0-0? as there is 26 ♙b3.

26 ♗xf5!

Less precise is 26 ♙xc6+ ♖xc6 27 ♗xf5, as Black is then not obliged to capture and can play a useful move such as 27...♗d8.

26...gxh5 27 ♙xc6+ ♖xc6 28 ♖g8+ ♙f8 29 ♖xh7 ♖e6 30 ♖xh5+ ♖f7 31 ♖h8 ♖g7!

A move that evokes the defensive adage 'A half-point is worth more than your dignity.'

32 ♖h5+ ♖f7 33 ♖h8 ♖g7 34 ♖h5+ ½-½

Only a draw for White's efforts, but he certainly obtained his pound of grandmaster sweat for the three invested pawns! Even now, years later, a friend of Mr Wagman's still talks to me of this game and claims that White was winning. I haven't found anything convincing but if somebody finds something...

Game 88

Short-Timman

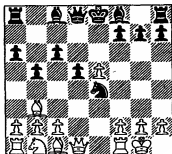
El Escorial (8th matchgame) 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♟c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♟f6
5 0-0 ♟xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 ♟xe5

A move with a reputation for being dull and drawish.

8...♟xe5 9 dxe5 c6

With this move, Black essentially kills off the influence of the b3-bishop on the a2-g8 diagonal. By uniting his c- and d-pawns the light-squared bishop and queen will not remain tied to the defence of the d5-strongpoint.



10 ♟d2

Not an impressive winning try!

Typical of the 8 ♟xe5 variation is 10 c3 ♙c5 11 ♖e2 0-0 12 ♙e3 ♙f5 13 ♟d2 ♖b6 when wholesale minor piece exchanges are on the cards, e.g. after the further 14 ♟xe4 ♙xe4 15 ♗fe1 ♗ad8 16 f3 ♙f5, the game Keres-Korchnoi, USSR Championship 1973, was equal.

White could keep more tension with 10 ♙e3!? ♙e7 11 c3 (11 ♟d2 ♟xd2 12 ♖xd2 0-0 13 ♖c3 fails to impress as White cannot maintain the bind on c5, e.g. 13...♙b7 14 f4 a5 15 a3 b4 16 ♖d2 a4 and Black had an equal game in Fischer-Addison, US Championship 1966/67) 11...0-0 (Krasenkov prefers 11...f5!? or 11...♟c5!?) 12 f3 ♟c5 13 ♙c2 f5 (on 13...♟e6 14 ♖d3 g6 15 ♙h6 ♟g7 White can try Tukmakov's risky suggestion of 16 g4!?, keeping Black out of f5) 14 exf6 ♗xf6, Barle-Tukmakov, Yugoslavia-Russia 1976, when 15 ♙d4! (15 f4!? ♙f5 16 ♙xf5 ♗xf5 17 ♟d2 is instead considered by Tukmakov as slightly better

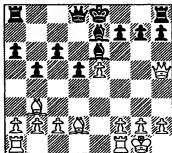
for White, due no doubt to the potential trump card of his mobile kingside majority) 15...♞f7 16 ♖d2 ♗e6 17 ♘e5 ♙d6 18 ♜e1 ♞aa7 was more than comfortable for Black.

10...♗xd2 11 ♘xd2 ♘e7 12 ♞h5

Without knights this attractive looking 'long-move' becomes feasible, but there is nothing for the queen to attack.

12...♘e6

Another way of defending would be 12...♞d7 13 c3 ♞f5 14 ♞d1 ♞g6.



13 c3 ♞d7 14 ♘g5 ♘f5! 15 ♞fe1

After 15 ♘xc7 Black's defence is tidied up with 15...♘g6.

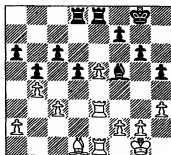
15...♘g6 16 ♞h4 ♘g5 17 ♞xg5 0-0 18 ♞ad1 ♞fe8 19 ♞e3

Another aggressive gesture from Short, but Black's position is as tough as granite. After the exchange of queens, note that White's bishop, denied the b1-h7 diagonal, is if anything the worse bishop.

19...♞f5 20 ♞xf5 ♘xf5 21 h3 h5

White's last hope for anything positive was a pawn-roller with g2-g4, f2-f4-f5 etc.

22 ♞de1 ♞ad8 23 ♘d1 g6 24 b4



24...c5!

The weak c3-pawn will keep White in check.

25 bxc5 ♞c8 26 a4 ♞xc5 27 axb5 axb5 28 g4 ½-½

28...hxg4 29 ♘xg4 is drawish.

Summary

White has nothing but a dull game after 6 ♖e1 (Game 83), or 6 d4 b5 7 ♗b3 d5 8 ♜xe5 (Game 88).

White's speculative 8 ♜c3 (Game 87) is positionally unsound, see the note to move 10.

Taking the second pawn on d4 on move seven is bad (Game 85), whereas on move six it's provocative but certainly playable; the downside is that White can force a draw (Game 84).

Finally, the adventurous 7...♗e7 (Game 86) sets different problems.

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♗b5 a6 4 ♗a4 ♜f6 5 0-0 ♜xe4

6 d4

6 ♖e1 (D) - Game 83

6...b5

6...exd4 - Game 84

7 ♗b3 d5

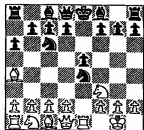
7...exd4 - Game 85

7...♗c7 - Game 86

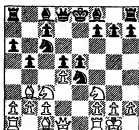
8 ♜xe5

8 ♜c3 (D) - Game 87

8...♜xe5 9 dxe5 c6 (D) - Game 88



6 ♖e1



8 ♜c3



9...c6

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open Ruy Lopez

